

High Ideals

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA





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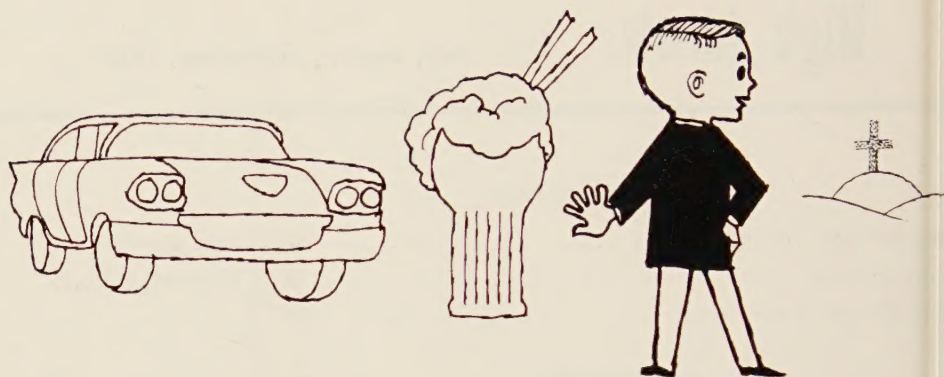
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ELEANOR MORA
PHILIP R. HOH
Editorial

RUTH SHAFER
Subscriptions



WHY IS "LIFE" WORTH LIVING

*when you have Christ
you have everything*

Some time ago I heard the famous metropolitan star Margaret Harshaw sing the song "I Love Life." Her singing thrilled me because truly I love life.

Of course, I have always been fortunate. I was raised in a Christian home where I was taught what Christian life really is. I have had pastors who set before me a spirit of Christian optimism because they seemed to feel that God can do anything. And, too, my teachers in seminary believed that the Bible was the Word of God. So, all of these advantages gave me a head-start.

Life is the subject of the Bible. Jesus said "I have come that you may have life and that you might have it more abundantly." You see, *life* was the reason for Christ's coming. Our business

is living and nothing else. Everything should fit into Christian living.

We all love our own lives. No one would trade his life for that of another person. Just think that over for a moment. I read a rather humorous story of a woman who was discouraged and thought that she would commit suicide. She started to wade out into the Schuylkill River in Fairmount Park. A park guard saw her. Placing his hands to his mouth he called "Lady, what are you doing?" She replied, "I am going to commit suicide." Taking his pistol from the holster, he yelled, "Come back here or I'll shoot you." What do you think she did? You are right. She came back. We love our lives. God made us that way.

see, a Christian is a person who has before him a most wonderful destiny. When our lives are finished here, the Bible says, "We shall be like Him." Christianity here on earth is trying, by the power of The Holy Spirit, to be "like Him." We now belong to God's new order—that of love, truth, and life. Every difficulty in our lives, like sickness or sorrow, has a meaning. God is working out something better for us. A Christian shut-in I know said, "Yes, I'm sick and shut-in. But I have a great destiny. I can afford to wait."

by ROSS STOVER

Certainly, for many life is not worth living. Concerning Judas who betrayed Him, Jesus said "It had been good for that man if he had not been born." And, too, there are many people who once were happy and now have lost the spring of joyful life within. They laugh very rarely.

Recently I read a short poem which describes folks who have lost their happiness. It is about a dachshund and reads like this:

*There was a dachshund once so long
He hadn't any notion
How long it took to reach his tail with
an emotion.
So, while his eyes were filled with tears
and sadness
His little tail kept wagging on
Because of a previous gladness.*

Life is Worth Living only to the Christian

Jesus said, "He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." The world is divided into two parts: You who are in Christ's Kingdom, and those who have never accepted Jesus as Saviour. In confirmation you knelt at the altar and said, "I renounce the Devil and all his works and ways, and I give myself to Thee, The Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in faith and obedience unto the end." That vow placed you in a position where life truly can be worth while. You

Sometime ago, I heard a minister define a Christian like this: A Christian man is one in whom Christ finds a Bethlehem for His birth and a Calvary for His resurrection. A Christian walks with Jesus. When you do that, you are walking with Omnipotence, because Christ can do anything.

Life at your age, or any age, faces tremendous problems. We are living in the most outstanding period in the life of the world, "the atom age." Today, all of our frontiers are new. These days are dangerous because we are always on the brink of something. At any moment we could be blown to pieces. And, at the same time, we may be on the threshold of the greatest era of man's history. Because of this situation we have become a nervous generation. Everything is moving and we do not know where. Right here is where Christianity makes life worth while.

A Christian can be an optimist in a pessimistic world. Talk to your non-Christian friends and you find that they give you very little comfort. Here is an incident which illustrates this common pessimism. A man was standing on a parapet, high on London Bridge. A bobby came along and called to him, "What are you doing away up there?" The man replied, "Life has no meaning for me. I'm going to jump down into the river." The bobby finally prevailed on him to come down and take a walk with him so that they might talk it over. The man came down. They took the long walk. They talked it over. Finally they

returned, and both of them jumped in.

Christianity is so different. You hear Christ say to you, "Fear not, it is God's good pleasure to give unto you the Kingdom." St. Paul adds, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."

Marvelous things have happened in my study where I counsel with folks about their difficulties. I call the chair in which these folks sit, my "miracle spot." Through all of these experiences, I have come to believe that Christ can do anything in any life that will let him in. You see, Christianity is to be in harmony with heaven, physically, mentally and spiritually. Our text book, the Bible, tells you how this can come about. It's something like the experience of the famous radio commentator, Ted Malone, who received a letter from an old gentleman living in the hills of Wyoming. This fine old man wrote as follows: "Mr. Malone, I play the violin, but I have no piano with which to tune it. In a few days will you sound "A" on the piano in your studio back in New York, so that I may tune my violin?" About one week later Ted announced over the radio, "My dear friend in Wyoming, if you are ready with your violin, I shall sound "A." He sounded the note in his studio in the east, and the old gentleman in the hills of Wyoming tuned his violin.

That's Christianity. God gave us the tone of life in Christ our Saviour so that we might get in tune with heaven.

Your Text-Book, the Bible

The best method of Bible reading is to start with the Gospels. Here you will see how Jesus lived. After you have read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, go on to the Epistles of St. Paul. They will give you the constitution of Christianity.

Daily reading will reveal to you what worthwhile living really exists. One summer while preaching a number of sermons in the Ocean Grove auditorium, I asked that cards be passed out to the large congregation. I invited all who would, to write on the back of the cards one reason why they were living. Many fine statements were given. However, all of them could be summarized in these two reasons: "God created me so that I might be an object of His love" and "God created me so that I might return His love." Just about every catechism printed gives these two reasons. They are what one would call summary reasons. For instance, to return God's love is to worship and adore Him and to express that love in every avenue of Christian service.

When Jesus was conversing with Nicodemus (John 3), He said, "You must be born again." As the conversation continued, He said, "You must be born of water and of the Spirit." Here is the deepest truth in the Bible.

When you became a Christian through baptism and belief, God bestowed upon you a new life. We continually strengthen that new life within ourselves when we worship, partake of the Holy Communion, and serve others in Christ's Name. I once heard a great preacher say, "God doesn't expect you to live a Christian life until He has given you of His life."

You see, so many of us try to serve God by our own will and by making certain resolutions. It is like expecting illumination from an electric light without connecting the switch. Life and abundant life are the result of God's living within us. Then, life is exuberant and enthusiastic. When Jesus comes in, within us are born faith, hope, love, and everything good. You become like an evergreen tree. When all other trees fairly

PHOTO and ART CREDITS: Cover photo by Luoma Photos. Art work on pages 11 and 29 from YOUTH PROGRAMS 58-59 and on page 33 by Sacred Design Associates. Other art work by Geraldine Sudlow.

die during fall and winter, the evergreen keeps its life and color the year round. The Christian rises above conditions.

Worthwhile Living Is Action for Christ

Christianity is action. It is practical. It works. Our real business is living. Living is always upward toward God and outward toward man. It is never inward toward self. No man ever lives who thinks only of himself. We are to "take up our cross and follow Jesus." I love the term "otheristic imagination."

Have you had a kindness shown, pass it on

'Twas not meant for thee alone, pass it on

Let it travel down the years

Let it soothe another's tears

Till in heaven, the deed appears

Pass it on.

We so often give God the little scraps and bits instead of living for a cause, like the martyr, Stephen. Many Christians just play around with their lives. They run with the crowd. Dean Inge, in describing many Christians, paraphrased the song, "The Son of God goes forth to war, Who follows in his train," to our present lazy attitude by changing one word. He read it like this, "The Son of God goes forth to war, Who follows in the train." I heard of a church on the west coast where the minister discontinued the Sunday night services and the deacons didn't discover it until two years later.

If you want to make life worthwhile, pray. But don't forget to practice. "Faith without works is dead." Expression is the proof of the new life which Christ has given to you.

You are living now, not yesterday, not tomorrow. Yesterday will help you. Tomorrow will inspire you. But today is your moment of service. It is something like the little six-year old girl. Someone asked her, "What are you going to be when you grow up?" She replied, "I don't know. But what I do want to

know is—what am I going to be now?"

Practice! Look for opportunities to do good for Christ. Ask your pastor what you can do in the church. Be alive, friendly, helpful and optimistic. The world needs some joy. Someone said, "He who laughs, lasts." Keep smiling, and when it is natural, let it break out into a laugh. You ought to be able to look into a mirror and say, "I'm the happiest person I know."

In my study I have more than thirty pictures of young men and women who have gone from our church into the ministry and mission fields. I look back over their lives and the same laws governed all. They held strong beliefs in Christ. They loved God's Word, the Bible. They wanted to do something for others. God was just waiting for them. In fact, He is waiting for you.

There is one great rule for Christian living. As you walk down the corridor of life, try to meet the needs of others for Christ's sake, and you will truly live. When you have Christ Jesus, you have everything.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Lead into the topic with a record or vocal solo of "I Love Life." Then write the three sub-titles on the blackboard. Give the introduction which with the poem about the dachshund. Follow this with a discussion of the three sub-titles. Add illustrations and bits of information from the topic material printed here. Rather than read the last sentence of the topic, write it on the board for a closing thought.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

PRAYER 47, page 371 (Christian Youth Hymnal)

HYMN 205 "O Jesus, Youth of Nazareth"

SCRIPTURE John 10:7-11

BENEDICTUS, page 358

HYMN 203 "Blest Are the Pure in Heart"

TOPIC

PRAYER 63, page 375

HYMN 202 "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go"

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

Explain the statement: life was the reason for Christ's coming. Why is life worth living only for the Christian? What problems does the Christian face in the atom age? What is Omnipotence? What is an optimist and a pessimist? Why are you living? How do we strengthen our lives? How does one witness to his Christianity?

THE MESSAGE OF POPULAR MUSIC

by KING BRADOW

what religious ideas
are presented
in "hit" tunes?

FROM the beginning, people have used music to express their emotions. Some of this music follows certain traditional patterns and is usually called "serious" or "good" music. This is contrasted by many people with "popular" or "juke-box" music, and often these people feel that popular songs from "Tina Turner's Pan Alley" have very little musical merit. Certainly, compared to the great classics, the popular songs are frequently here today and gone tomorrow and seldom have enduring musical interest. But while they are popular, they are very popular indeed and sometimes express the dreams, problems and ideals of the average person, especially the teenager, quite vividly.

Some of those dreams include religious ideals, and often the problems involve moral choices and religious principles. So popular songs frequently deal with things that have spiritual importance, though they seldom deal with "religion" directly. Therefore, the Christian must pay attention to the words of the songs he sings to see whether they express or deny what he believes. A leaguer can witness not only by singing hymns in church but in singing and playing, or not singing and playing, some of the songs on the hit parade. Each song should be examined individually, in the light of his Christian faith. It is hoped that this topic will help each leaguer to direct his attention toward examining more carefully the songs he sings.

On With the Music

(The song in this section is an example selected from music which was popular in early 1958. The discussion questions are intended simply as guides indicating some of the areas that should be considered in a Christian evaluation of popular music.)

"Just Born to Be Your Baby"

by Luther Dixon and Billy Dawn Smith
copyright by Winneton Music Corp.; sole selling agent, George Paxton, Inc.

Some people are born to be doctors,
Some are born to be lumberjacks,
Some are born just to take life easy,
Others are born to break their backs.

But I'm just born to be your baby,
Just born to love you, baby.
It's true, nobody else will do,
Just born to be your baby.

Some people will kiss and nothing happens,
Other's hearts are made of stones.
But whenever I feel our eyes meet,
Something starts crawling all through my bones.
Cause I'm just born (etc.) . . .

Now and then you start to wonder,
Will I be the perfect mate?
Don't you worry my pretty little darling,
I was all arranged by fate,
Cause I'm just born (etc.) . . .

Are people "just born" for certain jobs and certain kinds of lives? Are people "just born" to fall in love only with certain other people? Is there a "fate" that arranges everything? What about horoscopes, fortune telling and similar attempts to predict the future? What's the difference between belief in "just fate" and belief in Divine Providence? Is there anything in this song which is sub-Christian or anti-Christian?

These songs are typical of many which are always found among the more popular songs. Many of those which speak of God do it so vaguely that non-Christians also can agree with the words. "He," "The Old Master Painter," "The Magic of Believing," "The Eyes of God," "I Believe" and "Que Sera, Sera" are others which have been popular in recent years.

(If there is sufficient interest and recordings are available, leaguers may want to discuss the way in which some songs like "When the Saints Go Marching In," which were originally religious in purpose, have been given popular arrangements. Is this always bad? What are its dangers?)

Popular songs come and go, but the field of popular music, as a mold of our attitudes, is far too important to ignore. Not only are juke boxes found everywhere and not only do radios play much music morning, noon and night, but surveys show that young people largely determine what songs become "hits." Yet, as this material has tried to show,

there are all kinds of songs.

It has been said that many people when in church will sing hymns whose words they don't really believe. Is it true also that we sing popular songs which have lyrics we would never approve if we stopped to analyze them? The Christian, especially the young Christian, must develop the habit of asking himself questions about the basic ideas and viewpoint of individual songs, then check the answers against his Christian beliefs.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

This topic can follow the pattern of a radio disc-jockey forum program. The program leader is the disc jockey who introduces each song and leads the discussion afterward. Records may be borrowed from the personal collections of leaguers or a vocal group from the league may sing the selections.

It is more effective if the songs chosen are currently popular. Most record stores have lists of the now-popular records, and those in the "inspirational" category will usually be good material for this program. Magazines like "Song Hits" and "Hit Parade" are published monthly and contain the words of most currently popular songs. Almost all newsstands carry these magazines.

In small or medium-sized leagues, the leader can invite discussion from everyone as soon as the song is finished. In large groups or where discussion is slow in starting, it might be more effective to have a panel of three or four leaguers present their comments before the floor is opened to general discussion. Every leaguer should have a chance to express his opinion.

PURPOSE

To direct leaguers' attention to the religious ideas often presented in popular music. To help educate these religious ideas in the light of Christian faith. To strengthen the Christian witness of leaguers in this area of their daily life.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

SCRIPTURE Psalms 30, 33, 47, 100; 1 Corinthians 14:6-20; James 3:3-9.

HYMNS "Sing Forth With Gladsome Voice;" "Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above;" "Songs of Praise the Angels Sang;" "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty."

PRAYER THOUGHTS—Ask God for the wisdom to know when He is being glorified, and when denied, in the popular music we sing. Pray that His Holy Spirit will lead us to be Christian and not merely "religious," in our appreciation of "inspirational" popular music.

JESUS PRAYED



by EDWERTH E. KORTE

SURPRISED?

Are you surprised at the two-word statement made at the top of this page? It says quite simply and plainly "Jesus Prayed." Stop reading right now and think about it a minute. Come, come, really think about it.

Have you thought about it for a full minute? We believe Jesus is perfect. We believe He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. We believe He is divine (as well as human). Then why should He pray? From the record in the Bible, we know that Jesus spent much time in prayer. Not only that, He encouraged His followers to do the same.

Examples

1. The disciples, like many of us, must have felt dissatisfied with their prayer life, so they went to Jesus with this request: "Lord, teach us to pray." Of course, you know how He answered them! He answered them by praying what we now call The Lord's Prayer. (*Matthew 6:9*)

2. Matthew, Mark, and Luke use this phrase about our Lord: "and He went apart . . . to pray." We often find the King of Kings on His knees . . . away from the crowd . . . alone. Yet really not alone but with God the Father. (*Mark 6:46*)

3. You know, there was no doubt in Jesus' mind about prayer being answered.

He said something that seems hard to believe. In fact, many think that this is a wild statement. Do you know what I said? "Everything you ask for in prayer, if you have faith, you will receive" (*Matthew 21:22*) I suppose Jesus meant by this that a Christian, who believes with all his heart, so loves and trusts God that he knows God will answer his prayer. This does not mean He will say "Yes" every time.

4. If I could use only one example from the Bible it would be Luke 22:42. I'll quote it for you: "Not my will be Thine be done." It was in this spirit that Jesus prayed. I remember the days when I called on a young student in a college infirmary. He had an incurable disease. The doctors said he would live no more than six months. He was quite handsome, some, a top-notch student, and loved life. Of course he didn't want to die. We spent many hours together. I'll never forget that afternoon when he looked straight at me and said, "Pastor, I'm ready. I have given myself up to God. My prayer now is; not my will be Thine be done." It was in this spirit that he prayed the secret of prayer.

5. I hardly know what verse to quote next because there are only 496 left. I know that the word *pray* or *prayer* appears almost 500 times in the Bible. The prophets of old, the disciples, Jesus

and the early Christians knew the power of prayer. Let me give you one more example: "Men (teen-agers too) ought always to pray." I wonder why Jesus said this. Could it be because He knew that this is one way to God? Could it be because He knew this is one way to grow spiritually? Could it be that in prayer God can speak more directly to us? Could it be that this is a secret spiritual weapon of a Christian's life?

So much for examples taken from the Bible. I could now use 77 pages telling about the part prayer played in the lives of hundreds of men like Augustine, Luther, Wesley. Rather than that, let me tell you two stories. They are true.

Story #1

The scene is a death cell in a state prison. The prisoner is a 19 year old boy—a Lutheran. He committed murder. He awaited execution in the electric chair. The warden asked me, as a Lutheran pastor, to visit him. I did regularly. We talked intimately. We prayed often. I gave him the blessed Sacrament. I was convinced that he was deeply sorry for the sin he committed. I was convinced that God, in His mercy had forgiven him. In fact, following his confession before the communion, I read these words to him: "Upon the confession which thou hast made, and in obedience to our Lord's command, I declare unto thee, the entire forgiveness of all thy sins: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." I believe that God forgave this young man.

He, too, like the college student, was ready. Of course he didn't want to die. Of course he was afraid. But prayer helped him to face death—to conquer fear—to know that a merciful God had forgiven him. Prayer can do this for a believing Christian.

I often thought about Jesus' words to the thief on the cross during their execution, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." You possibly remember that Jesus prayed in the garden before His execution. He prayed, too, didn't He,

even when the soldiers were driving long nails into His slender hands. This prisoner prayed. The thief on the cross prayed. Jesus prayed. Do you pray? Really pray?

Story #2

His name was Joe. He went to school in California. He was taking the science course. He was not a Lutheran. In fact, he was not a Christian. Something was wrong with his heart. This meant he had to be very careful and could not engage in athletics or other activities.

He became interested in the L. S. A. (This means Lutheran Student Association. It is something like the Luther League for college students). He finally became a member of the Lutheran Church.

Not many months after he became a member of St. John's, he had a severe heart attack. The doctors advised an operation but were uncertain as to the outcome. Joe asked that members of the L. S. A. pray for him. Let Joe now speak for himself as I quote from his letter:

"For a time I hesitated, wondering if I were asking for the right thing, but now, in full confidence, I pray in this manner: 'Lord, if it be Thy will, give me health, that I might, with full strength, serve my fellow man in Thy name; but Thy will, O Lord, and not mine, shall be done, and with whatsoever Thou givest me will I be content, and I will serve Thee thankfully as best I know how. In Christ's name I pray. Amen.'"

He continues in his letter, "I may, in the next six weeks, be given one of four lots: 1) I may remain as I am; I have gotten along this way for twenty-three years and if God so wills it I can do it for another twenty-three and twice over and be thankful. 2) I may be made strong, and for that miracle I am asking. 3) I may be more crippled than ever; that would be a hard lot, but if it be God's will I shall accept it with thanks. 4) I may die; that holds no fears for me, for it will be the greatest adventure of all."

For Joe it proved to be the greatest adventure of all.

Then He Went Out

I saw an excellent TV program not long ago. I can't remember the story too well, but I will always remember a line one of the characters spoke. It was something like this: "Pray as though everything depends on God. Work as though everything depends on you."

Jesus prayed, and then He went out to teach. Jesus prayed, and then He went out to heal. Jesus prayed, and then He went out to preach. Jesus prayed, and then He went out to work. It isn't enough just to pray, important as that is. But if you pray, really pray, you work as though everything depends on you, knowing, you see, that everything depends on God.

I have little use for a young person who prays:

(a) "Lord, help me to be more generous" and the following day spends 75¢ or more on a movie and coke (which incidentally is all right), but grudgingly drops a dime in the offering plate.

(b) "Lord, deliver me from temptation" (cheating for instance), and then goes to school next day and cheats.

(c) "Dear Lord, I'm sorry, please forgive me," and then withholds forgiveness from one of his friends.

(d) "O God, make me a finer person," and then, knowingly, does those things which displease God.

Because prayer is powerful, prayer is dangerous. Jesus meant it when he prayed, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Jesus won't forgive you if you won't forgive others. Jesus won't help you if you won't help others. Jesus won't make you kind, thoughtful, unselfish, etc., unless you really want to become kind, thoughtful, and unselfish. He will help you, but you must want to be helped.

Prayer is a conversation, not a monologue. Many of us have the mistaken idea that we must do all the talking. The Bible says, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Many young people misread that somehow to "Listen, Lord, thy servant speaketh."

I have a suggestion—rather an experiment—to offer. Beginning tonight and continuing for a week, instead of "saying" your prayers, use that time "listening" to God. Let me pause right here to remind you that God can "speak" to you. He may not use words that you actually "hear" with your ears, but you may use your mind to "hear" His voice. God can also speak to you through His Word—the Bible. I won't embarrass you by asking when you last privately read your Bible. Yes, I think I will embarrass you by asking that question. Well?

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Get two big pieces of heavy paper or cardboard to make placards. On one side of each write JESUS and on the other side write YOU. On the second placard write PRAYED. On the other side write PRAY.

Introduce the topic simply by holding up the placards reading JESUS PRAYED. Or place them on a stand where everyone can see them. Tell the leaguers to think about it, as the topic material suggests.

Divide into groups to read and discuss the examples of Jesus in prayer. Or have a person read the section from the topic to the entire group, a second person read the scripture reference, and then discuss as a group.

Reassemble and have two people read the stories. Continue the topic with the four prayers of young people read by four leaguers. You may want to act them out if you have time.

Complete the topic and have the group summarize what they have learned about prayer. Then turn the placards over to read YOU PRAY for a few moments of silent consideration.

This topic may be a kick-off for more topics on prayer. Consult the HIGH IDEALS or Lutheran Life indexes for former topics on prayer.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

HYMN 164 (Christian Youth Hymnal) "My Alleluia for Mighty Empire"

PSALM 121, responsively, page 355

HYMN 70 "Father, in Thy Mysterious Presence Kneeling"

GUIDED PRAYER or SENTENCE PRAYERS

PSALM 63, p. 348, choral reading (Arrange this for four people or mimeograph copies for the entire group.)

HYMN 101 "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty"
SILENT PRAYER

HYMN 93 "I Name Thy Hallowed Name"



THE LUTHERAN FAMILY TODAY

present merger trends

by DAVID PREUS

The scene opens in just any room with Grandpa holding a pipe or twirling key chain.

RANDPA: Yep, it's quite a family! (*Points to the milling group of 12 leaguers, each with a synod sign hanging around the neck*). Not many of them left though. You just should have seen them all in the good old days. Why, we had so many Lutheran offspring we needed a secretary to keep them straight—about 150 separate synods at one time or other. You see, the Lutherans came to North America from many different countries and spoke many different languages. When they came to this land, they settled in many different areas. Language differences and geographical differences led to the development of numerous synods. Now take the United Lutheran Church in America. Step forward, will you, ULCA? Tell us a little about your upbringing.

LCA: That would take a week! But this I can tell you: The United Lutheran Church in America is a union of three former synods. Each of those, in turn, was a union of many other synods. Most of them were of German background, and the synods developed chiefly in the East. Pennsylvania, New York, even the

The Lutheran youth auxiliaries have been cooperating for many years. Evidence of this is seen in the exchange of articles and topics among the youth magazines. Now plans are underway to merge these magazines and topic manuals. We are happy to print here a topic from YOUTH PROGRAMS 58-59; Charles Lutz, editor; Minneapolis, Minnesota. Several other topics in this issue are reprinted with permission. Our thanks to YOUTH PROGRAMS.

Carolinas and Georgia is where we got our start. Then as the years went by we moved West. In 1918 we joined together to form the ULCA, and we are now the largest American Lutheran group, having about two and a third million members.

GRANDPA: That gives you folks a notion of how these present children came into being. Most of these synods are the products of former unions. As the Lutheran Church became more numerous, as the language and geography barriers broke down, the Lutheran synods just kept uniting. These up here (*pointing*) are the ones left. And it looks like some of them won't be around long!

ELC: You said it, Grandpa! We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church are soon going to merge with the ALC and UELC. That'll cut down the old family!

ALC: What's more, it will be the first full-scale merger between different national background groups. The ELC is Norwegian in background, we of the American Lutheran Church are German, and the UELC is Danish.

UEL: So in 1960 the three of us plan to merge into The American Lutheran Church. The United Evangelical Lutheran Church will become a part of a larger and more effective body. Instead of the million-member ELC, the 900,000 of the ALC, and the 60,000 of the UELC, there will be the two-million-member TALC. (*During this talk the ELC, ALC, and UELC group together, bring out large card with new name, TALC.*)

LFC: The Lutheran Free Church almost came into that union, too! In the fall of 1957 our congregations voted on it, and we were just 15 votes short of the necessary two-thirds majority. Like the ELC our background is Norwegian, and we now have about 75,000 members. (*Takes place near, but separate from TALC.*)

GRANDPA: Like I said, these Lutheran children are in a uniting mood. It will be interesting to see if the differing national backgrounds really make any difference. There just might be a stubborn Norwegian and a stubborn German . . . that would make the sparks fly! (*Chuckles.*) You children have had some experience in unions before. Why not tell the folks a little about it.

ALC: The date of our birth as the American Lutheran Church is 1930. At that time the Joint Synod of Ohio, the Iowa Synod and the Buffalo Synod joined hands. Most of the people in these groups came to America from Germany in the great immigrations of the 19th Century. Some were associated with the ULCA and the Missouri Synod at various times, but sociological and doctrinal differences helped lead us into our present form.

ELC: Our synodical life dates back to the middle of the 19th Century. The first 50 years saw all kinds of synodical jostling. We Norwegians were trying to fit ourselves in this strange American scene. By the early years of the 20th Century

the Norwegian-Americans had settled into four main groups. These were called the Hauge, United and Norwegian Synods, and the Lutheran Free Church. In 1917 the Hauge, United and Norwegian Synods united and formed what is now known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the ELC. At that time a small minority of the Norwegian Synod decided not to go into the union. You'll hear more about them later.

FC: That speech brings you up to date on us too. The "Free" in our synodical name testifies to a strong feeling about congregational freedom. We have attempted to remind all American Lutherans of the Sovereign freedom of the local congregation. Synods are not *the* important vessel of church life. The local congregation is the place where God meets us in Word and Sacrament and joins us in Christian fellowship.

ELC: Our history is somewhat the simplest, apparently. Our Danish folk settled all over the U. S., mostly in small colonies. For us Danish Lutherans also, both doctrinal and sociological reasons led to the development of two groups. 1872 and 1884 are the dates of this beginning. Ours began in 1884 and we have not had any unions since then. We feel like we're making up for lost time by being the one who made the initial move in forming TALC, back in 1948.

GRANDPA: There are still more union moves in the air. You, Augustana, tell us what you're up to.

AUGUSTANA: Well, Grandpa, we have close family ties with most all these folk, so we tried hard to get all of them to unite at once. We think that would have been easiest, quickest, and wisest. Some of the other synods were ready, but others were not. Now our 550,000-member, Swedish-background church is discussing a four-way union.

ULCA: Last year Augustana and ULCA wrote to all the Lutheran bodies inviting them into union negotiations. In addition to ourselves, the AELC and Suomi have responded to the invitation.

AELC: Yes, our union negotiations have developed quickly, and they seem to be bearing fruit. It looks like the next several years might well see the American Evangelical Lutheran Church merged with these others. Our synod is of Danish background and our membership is about 20,000.

SUOMI: Our Finnish background is quickly becoming American. So our 35,000 members are ready for a new union too. With everybody moving all the time in the U. S., it will be much better if we have fewer synods.

TALC: That's one of the things that made these eight synods get to work on a new hymnal and liturgical service. With our people moving around all the time, and frequently transferring from one synod to another, we needed a service that all would know and understand. It will be nice for all of us to be singing the same hymns, too.

AUGUSTANA: The new hymnal is in most of our churches now. Distribution began in April of 1958. Better check and see if your congregation is getting it.

GRANDPA: Augustana, tell us a little about how your synod came into being:

AUGUSTANA: Like the rest of the folks here, at first it was a matter of gathering immigrants into congregations. To begin with, it was gathering the Swedes. The years have changed that, though. In our background are very close relationships

with the Norwegians. In fact, for many years we belonged to the United Scandinavian Conference in Northern Illinois. Then for many years, we belonged to the General Synod. When this group became a part of the ULCA in 1911, our synod decided to continue independently. That's the way it has been to now.

GRANDPA: Very interesting! Now then, these eight synods (*pointing to the abode gathered at one side of the stage*) represent two-thirds of American Lutheranism and are grouped together in what is called the National Lutheran Council. Most of their members like each other fine, and many of them wish that at least these eight would unite at once. That's not likely in the immediate future, but meantime they work together very well through the NLC. Student work, chaplain services, Lutheran World Action, welfare, missions, and other areas all get their joint attention. Now, that still leaves us with these four (*motioning to the remaining synods*). The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is largest, so you speak first, Missouri.

MISSOURI: Yes, our membership recently went past the two million mark. We are of German background, and our founding fathers came to this country via New Orleans, up the Mississippi, and settled in the Missouri country. That's how we came by our name. What else would you like to know about us?

GRANDPA: Well now, your synod is not in any of these union movements. How come?

MISSOURI: Several reasons probably. I'll limit myself to two. We don't feel that there is enough doctrinal agreement among the Lutheran synods. We maintain that complete doctrinal unity must precede union. We don't feel this has been present. The second thing is that our closest ties have been with the Synodical Conference. (*With inclusive sweep of hand, points to the remaining synods and the Synodical Conference sign is put up.*) This conference has been in existence for many years. Right now, we're having enough trouble within the Synodical Conference to keep us busy for a while.

SLOVAK: Just make sure that you don't look at me when you speak about trouble in Missouri. We are a peaceful, 20,000-member synod of Slovak background. You other three are the ones to talk about trouble in the Synodical Conference.

WISCONSIN: We admit to being in trouble in the Synodical Conference all right. Even though our Midwest German background has given us much kinship with Missouri, we now feel it necessary to call on Missouri to mend her ways. We believe that Missouri is not strict enough in her doctrinal position. She allows scouting in her churches, and allows her men to enter the military chaplaincy. Furthermore, we think she's too friendly with other Lutheran groups who are of differing doctrinal minds. All the National Lutheran Council bodies but ours are members of the World Council of Churches. These activities, we are convinced, involve her in unionism of a sinful sort. Unless Missouri changes the matters, we will find it necessary to withdraw our 300,000 members from fellowship with her in the Synodical Conference.

NORWEGIAN: In this matter, our 12,000 members stand with Wisconsin. We certainly don't like to see the Synodical Conference break up, but it's better that they pretend agreement on all points of doctrine. Agreement must be there for fellowship. It is not good to have to pretend.

MISSOURI: We also look with displeasure at the possible breakup of the Conference. We long for greater, not lesser unity. However, we long for greater unity among all Lutherans. Our people have enjoyed fruitful associations with Lutherans of many synods, and many countries. As a result, there is great interest among us in joining the Lutheran World Federation. Also there is much concern as to whether we may not in good conscience join the National Lutheran Council. So you see, there is quite a stew boiling in our pot.

GRANDPA: That takes care of almost all the Lutherans in America. There are four more independent organized groups, all numerically very small. They are: the Lutheran Brethren (Norwegian background), Finnish Apostolic, National Evangelical Lutheran (Finnish background), and the Eielsen Synod (Norwegian background). These four total only about 20,000. There are so many things going on. (*Shooing the synods off stage.*) It's too much for an old man to follow. I do enjoy watching them though. Word and Sacrament are common to them all, the Church is gathered, and the Church is one even when there are many synods. You know, I wouldn't be surprised if you young people lived to see practically all the American Lutheran family gathered under one roof, in one Church body. With God, all things are possible.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Purpose: To give young people a current picture of the union movements among Lutheran groups in North America. Also, to give them enough history to understand the present synodical structure. It may be presented by the league to an adult group which is interested—perhaps to the entire congregation.

The presentation is written for a cast of 13, including Grandpa and 12 synod-children. However, it can easily be adapted for smaller leagues by substituting cardboard "building blocks," boxes or cartons of various sizes, for the synods, and then using just three participants. Grandpa could play his part, and a second person could move the labeled "building blocks" around on a table, lifting them up as they are talked about, and then putting them in their proper union groupings. A third person should just be a voice from behind a screen. This person would narrate the speeches of the various synods. As he narrates, the person with the blocks will lift up the proper one or its sign to indicate which synod is speaking. Grandpa should sit in a rocker pretending to be puffing in a pipe while not talking. The person with the blocks would have a sort of hectic time, and might be humorous, but that would add to the presentation.

Signs bearing the synodical name will be important in either mode of presentation. If you

use people, large signs should be hung around the neck of the participants. The sign should show the abbreviated form of the synodical name. Make sure the letters can be seen by all!

The following abbreviations should be used: ULCA, ELC, ALC, UELC, LFC, AUG, AELC, MO, WIS, and NORW. SUOMI and SLOVAK can be printed in full. Three additional signs will be needed: TALC for the body soon to be formed, NLC for National Lutheran Council, and SC for Synodical Conference. Following the performance, these signs should be kept prominently displayed for the remainder of the evening.

If you have time, the signs could also include, in small letters for closer inspection, the following data: full name, national background, and baptized membership figure.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

HYMN 138 "O Word of God Incarnate (Christian Youth Hymnal)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SCRIPTURE Ephesians 4:1-6, 11-16

THE APOSTLES' CREED, page 342

HYMN 148 "The Church's One Foundation"

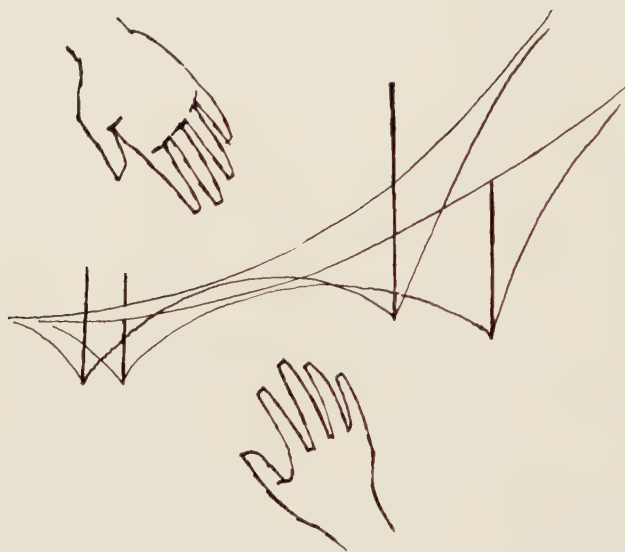
PRAYER 34, page 368

PSALM 91

HYMN 150 "Built on the Rock, the Church Doth Stand"

PRAYER 31, page 368

HYMN 232 "Onward, Christian Soldiers"



CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD

a topic based on hymns
of brotherhood

by RICHARD C. PANKOW

ONE of the legends that was taught to us as children concerns the young boy who was a shepherd. This shepherd was placed in charge of a certain flock of sheep. He was told by his elders that if there was danger he was to cry "Wolf." It got rather lonely for the boy as he stood watching the sheep so he decided to cry "Wolf" even though there was no wolf. This brought his elders running. All the fuss he caused made him feel important so he did this a number of times. Finally a wolf actually came but his cry for help went unheeded. As a result many of the sheep were lost.

In the area of Christianity the word "brotherhood," is used in much the same way as the cry, "Wolf." It has been used so many times improperly that when the word is actually used in its best sense it goes unheeded. Some of the hymns of the Church can help us rebuild our idea of Christian brotherhood.

Brotherhood Through Christ

SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:1-21

NARRATOR: The time is mid 19th Century. The place is a small suburb of Windsor, England. The community is made up largely of poor working people. We see before us a small church called St. Paul's, Haggston. The pastor of this church is the Rev. Samuel John Stone. Mr. Stone had served as an assistant pastor earlier in his career so this was his first real pastorate. At college he had been an all around sort of chap and was captain of the college crew. While he was in school he had mixed emotions about his future. There was a strong desire to have a military career along with an equally strong pull to be a minister. He chose the latter. Because of the kind of neighborhood in which his church was located, Mr. Stone was accustomed to making his parish calls on a tricycle (this was before the days of bicycles). Imagine Mr. Stone sitting on his tricycle conversing with some of the ladies of his parish.

MR. STONE: It is a matter of grave concern to me that so many members of the parish are not paying attention during the reciting of The Apostle's Creed.

FIRST WOMAN: Aye, Pastor, but it is so long.

MR. STONE: Nevertheless, we must not miss its meaning.

SECOND WOMAN: But we've said it so many times it's hard to pay attention.

MR. STONE: (*thinking out loud*) Maybe if the people got the ideas of the Creed in a different form they would remember how important it is. (*speaking to the ladies*) How would it be if I wrote a hymn about Christ being the means of our salvation and used some of the ideas in The Creed?

FIRST WOMAN: That's a bully idea.

SECOND WOMAN: Maybe it won't be so hard to stay awake.

(*time lapse*)

FIRST WOMAN: Well, singing that new hymn of Mr. Stone's makes me appreciate the Apostle's Creed more.

SECOND WOMAN: Yes, dearie, it helps me to understand that Christ is the head of the Church and we are all its members because of Him.

HYMN 149 "The Church's One Foundation"

Brotherhood Because of Christian Love

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 13

NARRATOR: Charles Wesley was one of the famous Wesley Brothers. Brother John is credited with being the founder of the Methodist Church. Charles, however, never left the established Church of England to follow his brother's footsteps. The family was noted for its contributions to the field of Christian hymnody. Charles, however, would have received a gold star in his crown for the number of hymns he wrote. In his lifetime—he lived from 1707 to 1788—it is said he composed over 6500 hymns. If he had written hymns at a rate of one a day it would have taken him over 18 years. Charles would write a hymn on any subject anywhere. It was

rumored that he even wrote hymns while riding on horseback. Listen to him as he might have been talking to himself as he rode through the countryside amidst eavesdropping animals.

WESLEY: (*musings*) I know I've written other hymns on Christian love before, but it is so basic to our faith that I think I'll do another. Where's my ballpoint quill?

COW: There goes that Wesley preacher again. Judging from the look on his face he's hymnodized.

WESLEY: I wonder if people realize that Christian love is so basic because it stems from God's love through Christ for us.

CROW: He must have a real bright idea this time. Look at the glow on his face.

COW: He looks just like one of my contented relatives.

WESLEY: Well that's the hymn for today. God's love for us causing us to love, serve, and adore.

CROW: That must have been an especially good one.

COW: He even threw his pen away.

HYMN 397 "Love Divine, All Love Excelling"

Who Is My Brother?

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28: 16-20

NARRATOR: Canon Henry Scott Holland—before we go any further,—I must clarify that even though Mr. Holland was a big shot in the Church of England the Canon is a church title and not the size of his firearms. Now, Canon Holland was a minister in the Anglican Church. Born in 1847 he lived to be 71 years old and died in the 20th Century. Canon Holland spent most of his years as a teacher of one sort or another. Throughout his life he was interested in the social and economic problems of the world. Despite the fact that he wrote often and well in other fields he wrote only one hymn. That this hymn is remembered at all is a testimony to its quality. The hymn echoes his concern for mankind. In later years Canon Holland became a professor in the Divinity School at Oxford. Picture this conversation he might have had with some of his colleagues on the faculty.

HOLLAND: I'm quite concerned.

FIRST PROFESSOR: Hmmm—

SECOND PROFESSOR: What's bothering my esteemed colleague today?

HOLLAND: Often times I think we place too much stress on taking the Christian faith to the distant heathen.

SECOND PROFESSOR: But isn't this the Church's first duty?

FIRST PROFESSOR: Hmmm—

HOLLAND: Certainly we would all agree that the Church must be concerned with spreading the gospel to foreign lands. Sometimes, however, we forget that we must witness to *all* people.

SECOND PROFESSOR: All people is a pretty broad category.

FIRST PROFESSOR: Hmmm—

HOLLAND: I know. But God's love to us and through us to our fellowmen is also a broad category.

SECOND PROFESSOR: That's so.

FIRST PROFESSOR: Hmmm—

HOLLAND: Remember, gentlemen, God's love goes to the weary, the crowded city dweller, and the farmer, in every nation across the world—but also to our very own. It is our job to see that it is offered to man here also.

SECOND PROFESSOR: Quite so.

FIRST PROFESSOR: I must remember that. You say that God's love flows to us but it cannot stop there. It must flow through us to our fellowmen.

HYMN 343 "Judge Eternal, Throned in Splendor"

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Tell the story of the boy who cried, "Wolf," and its connection with brotherhood.

Assign beforehand the parts to the people who will read the roles of the characters in each skit. It will take a narrator and three other people for each skit. The same people may be used for all the skits. For each skit there is a theme, an assigned hymn and a scripture passage. The hymns come from the **Service Book and Hymnal**. You may want to take the scripture lesson from one of the new translations of the Bible. Be sure to sing all of the verses of the hymns. Two of the hymns are very familiar. The third one will be new to most of you. These skits may be presented in the style of a dramatic reading with the participants involved sitting on stools in front of the group.

The general theme for each hymn is as follows: a. Christian brotherhood through Christ—"The Church's One Foundation;" b. God's love, the basis of our love to our fellow man—"Love Divine;" c. Who is our fellow man—"Judge Eternal, Throned in Splendor."

Questions for discussion may also be used as subjects for buzz sessions. The further research may be done by the group or as outside activity.

DISCUSSION

Can there be true brotherhood without Christ? Is it possible for one person to have a feeling of brotherhood towards another person or group of people and not have the feeling returned?

Can there be brotherhood outside the Church? Is it the same thing? Should we use a different word, perhaps "charity" in the sense of 1 Corinthians 13 as the Christian word for brotherhood? This would leave the word brotherhood for the secular world. Is there a better word for this relationship than charity?

RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Find hymns that bind us in Christian brotherhood with the communion of saints of all ages. Check the indexes of various hymnbooks for hymns by Clement of Alexandria, Paul Gerhardt, Isaac Watts, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Luther D. Reed.

2. Between meetings check at various organizational meetings in school or scouts or other groups to see if hymns are sung that will not be "offensive" to any group so that brotherhood is encouraged. Is a hymn without an allusion to God's love for us in Christ.

3. Check indexes in the back of various hymnals for hymns on the subject of brotherhood, and love. After examining the text, do they pass the test of Christ centeredness essential to brotherhood.

4. Can you think of occasions where it would be better not to sing a hymn at a public meeting rather than to sing a hymn that would compromise our own religious position.

5. Is it possible to plan excursions into various other churches to see what their feelings are in the matter of brotherhood, and see if they have hymns that are more liberal than ours?

Another name for the pen pal list:

BEVERLY JESCHKE

Route 1, Miles, Texas, Trinity League, Age 12.

Oil painting, tennis, piano, dancing, and swimming

LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT

slow poison
for
children of God

by a former Luther Leaguer

"LITTLE *Things Mean a Lot*" was the name of a popular song several years ago. This little phrase is bandied around quite a bit in everyday conversation. However trite it may sound, it has many applications and much truth.

Too many times we who pride ourselves in being Christians forget the "little" things—things which have become so much a part of our day to day life that we almost forget about them and, consequently, do little, if anything, about them. There are three practices which are so very common that it took me a long time to realize that they are slow poison for children of God.

Insincerity

Have you ever told a lie? I mean a really *big* lie? Many of us tell "little white lies." Or have you ever said, "How lovely you look in that dress, my dear," while thinking to yourself, "That is a nice dress, but in such poor taste for her figure." Perhaps you prided yourself in not being totally dishonest. You *did* like the dress. It is just that you did not like it on her. This is the next step down from lying: insincerity. A person can express insincerity not only through words spoken, but also through the time at which something is said and through the tone of voice.

People feel that they can get away with being insincere because it is a quality of mind rather than a specific more concrete act such as telling a lie. A lie can be disproven, but try to prove to someone that he is being insincere. You may have good reason to believe beyond a doubt that Joe is being insincere. Try to get him to admit it; try to prove to him that he is acting wrongly. The very fact that you cannot makes him feel more comfortable and secure, even though he may realize he is being insincere and wrong.

Insincerity is more than just a mild form of lie. It is evidence of our human nature trying to make life a little easier. Each experience we go through, no matter how often it occurs or how petty it may seem, serves in some way to add to our character, both as individuals and, more important, as Christians.

Our human nature is almost constantly in conflict with the Christian nature we are striving to build. If we let the Christian nature give way to human tendencies, even in seemingly unimportant experiences, we strengthen our human nature and make it more difficult for our Christ



ian self to shine through as rightful owner of our soul.

Perhaps this sounds like difficult philosophy. It means this in reference to insincerity: whenever we let ourselves act insincerely, it is just because we want to make a certain situation easier for ourselves. We may want something better for ourselves, or we want to avoid embarrassment, or there may be any number of other reasons. When we do this, our strength as Christians is watered down, and we become wishy-washy Christians, people not even deserving of the name. One of the most difficult things for us who live in America to understand is that the life of *any* Christian is difficult. This difficulty may be encountered physically, mentally, or spiritually. What would Christianity be today if Christ had been insincere?

Excuses

We are more prone to frown, however slightly, at excuses than at insincerity. To me the word *excuse* has two connotations. One is the concrete excuse that students take to school to prove that they have been absent for some good reason, such as illness or death in the family. More often *excuse* is a jellyfish word which means that a person is attempting to put blame or reason on someone or something else in order to save his own face.

"I'm sorry, but I just can't make the district meeting. Our school's biggest formal of the whole year is the night before, and I'll just be dead tired the next day. If I don't get some rest sometime, I won't be fit for school all next week!"

A church recently had a building fund drive. One farmer approached by a church worker told her, "I just don't see how I can give to this building drive because my cows have fallen down on their milk production, and the summer was too dry for my crops." To this the worker replied, "You know, your cows and land are giving you all they've got. That's more than you are doing."

What room was left for excuses? Did

Christ "excuse" himself away from the cross? What if he had said, "I don't have time today. My favorite TV program is on."

Preconceived Ideas

Everyday we meet new people and encounter new situations. It is only natural for us to form preconceived ideas as to what a person is like solely from his appearance. It is also easy to form preconceived ideas as to what part a person took in a situation we know only a little about. There is nothing wrong with "first impressions" just so long as they are temporary.

What bothers me is the fact that more often than not these impressions are unfavorable. It seems that we are all too ready to believe the wrong thing. We find it difficult to believe or consider the right thing. "She looks stuck-up," or "He looks dumb."

I do not believe in a gullible, non-questioning acceptance of all that goes on around us. A Christian is intelligent. It is the idea that we criticize before we have reason to criticize. We shall never have that right. It belongs only to God.

Shall we condemn once we know a person to be wrong? In our democracy the law provides that a man is innocent until proven guilty. Christ went a step further. He knew many people who were drastically wrong. Rather than condemning them for their wrong (shadow of their past) He loved them because they were children of God and He welcomed them into His eternal Kingdom of love.

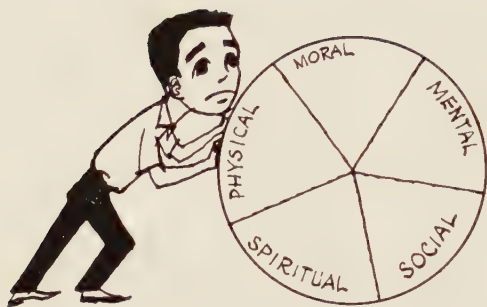
PRESENTATION POINTERS

For your introduction have the pianist play "Little Things Mean a Lot." Ask the leaguers to identify the song.

Use three placards on which are written each of the three sub-titles, the letters jumbled. Allow a few minutes to unscramble the words.

Act out a scene for insincerity such as a girl exclaiming over another's dress and then to herself remarking what poor taste. Let the group guess which of the three unscrambled words the scene portrayed. If they haven't been able to unscramble the word, indicate which of the

(Continued on page 48)



THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

a topic on personality

by JUDY FORD

THIS is a personality wheel. (Holds up cardboard wheel with five sections marked off. In each of the five sections, a different word is written standing for the different parts of a person's personality. The words are: Mental, Moral, Physical, Social, Spiritual.) All of us in order to be well-rounded teenagers and later mature adults must develop in these five ways. See how smoothly this wheel will roll across the floor. (Roll the cardboard across the floor.) Now I'm going to cut out an entire section of the wheel to see if it will still roll. (Cut out any section, then try to roll it. It does not roll well, if at all.) As you can observe, the wheel doesn't roll as smoothly as it did. We have trouble getting it to roll even once. This shows us what can happen to our personalities if we fail to develop in any one of these five areas. Maybe you are wondering:

What is a "personality?" Your personality is the sum total of all you are—your likes, dislikes, talents, hobbies, manners, everything.

For a little while, imagine you are a mirror. Several people are going to be looking into you as you reflect their images. Try to determine what is lacking in each of the following personalities, how they can improve and which person is most likely to develop into a mature person. First we confront a campus beauty.

Betty Beauty

(Betty Beauty appears before the group and either says the following lines or pantomimes as someone out of sight reads them. If the pantomime is chosen, then two readers are needed, one for the girls and one for the boys. Betty Beauty looks at the group as if she were looking into a mirror and talking to her mirror.)

Mirror, mirror on the wall . . . am I not fairest of them all? That beauty contest at school, just can't understand it! Anyone can see I'm much prettier than Jane Thomas, yet she was elected May Queen. Of course, she only won twenty-four votes. She probably paid some freshman to stuff the ballot box—the cheat! Look at my eyes, how blue. Just last night Bill told me they sparkled like the stars . . . and my hair, the blonde in school—well, maybe it is a little peroxidized, but it used to be naturally blonde. The boys never whistle at Jane, but you should hear the wolf-calls when I breeze past. There was something crooked about that election; time will tell. Oh, mirror, mirror, on the wall, look at me and see I'm the most beautiful of them all.

Slick Chick

Look at me, Mr. Mirror, if you think you're smooth as glass. I'm absolutely positively, the slickest man in town. You should have seen how innocent I acted today when old Pie-Face slapped the "100, very good" on my Latin paper. Didn't I pull the wool over her eyes, though? That Sally Smart, told me after class she wouldn't report me for cheating, but she wanted me to know she didn't

approve and hopes I'll think seriously about it. Who does she consider herself, Saint Sally? Ha! Ha! "Consider it seriously"—that's exactly what I did! It requires genius to outsmart old Pie Face. Besides, why should I cry if she's still living in the dark ages? When I was caught last year, I lied. Dad fixed that square—told her if she ever again accused me of cheating, he'd take the matter before the school board. As long as I get through high school, I don't care about knowledge. When I get that sheepskin, I'm gonna get me a job making big money. That's all that's important these days and I'm slick enough to make loads. Mirror, mirror, on the wall, ain't I the coolest cat of all!

Barbara Bookworm

Dear mirror, what's wrong with me? I'm so lonely. Sure, Mom and Dad are nice, but I want friends my own age. I'll bet if I had money like Susan or clothes like Lynn I'd have friends. I was the only girl in my class who didn't have a date for the party, so I sat back in a corner where I couldn't be seen. I was never so glad as when Dad came for me. On the way to English class, Tom looked at me as if he wanted to ask me something, but I hurried on because I never know what to say to boys and they might laugh at me. Tom could have been planning to speak to me about the party. Oh, well, it's over now. Last week Evangeline asked me over to her house, but I didn't go because she always plays records and I don't like music. I probably have the highest grades in my class—straight A's since the first grade. All my teachers speak commendably of me to my parents. The principal declares I'll receive a scholarship to the best college in the country. If they only knew how I'd trade all those A's for a few friends. Well, dear mirror, back to the books—geometry test tomorrow.

Bob Bully

Old man mirror, I didn't want to fight Ben today, but after he called me that name, the gang would have thought I

was a first-class coward—yea, real yellow, if I'd let him get away with it. I felt real bad when it was over and his nose was bleeding, maybe broken. Trouble is, I doubt if his old man has the money to send him to see the doc, stays drunk half the time. Why do I start thinking this way? He had it comin' to him. Sometimes I wonder if there ain't a little good in me. Last summer I even went to church, but I don't want the gang to think I've turned religious. Sure made me feel great though when the preacher started tellin' how God's Son, Jesus, picked some tough-skinned fishermen to help him out. I always thought Christians wuz sissy. Wish I could tell the gang about it. The way I got it figured, when I get old and settled I might start to church regular. Wonder if Ben's nose stopped bleedin'? Looks like he gave me a few good scratches too.

Gerty Gossip

Let me tell you what I overheard today, can't wait to see Mary to give her the latest scoop on the Smith fight. Last night the Mulls who live beside the Smiths heard a terrible noise coming from the Smith's house. Mrs. Mull counted 15 cups and three saucers flying out the front door and heard Mrs. Smith say, "Go and don't you ever come back." Then a big black car came and Mr. Smith got in. Nancy Morris is on the party-line with the Smiths and her mother listened in on a phone conversation between Mrs. Smith and her sister. Nancy wouldn't tell what they said, but I've an idea I know. Suzie said that her cousin who works at the train station told her aunt who in turn told Suzie's mother who told Suzie that Mr. Smith was down at the train station at 7:36 this morning buying a ticket for New York. I can't be sure how true it is, but I've heard he's leaving her because he's allergic to her parakeet. We have plenty to talk about this afternoon. See you later, Marvelous Mirror. Pick up all the news you can while I'm at Mary's. By the way, do you understand why Sam called me "nosey" today? I must have been hearing things again!

Joe Leaguer

Whee! Have I rushed around today. Had to hurry home from school and was delayed because some poor old lady had dropped her groceries right in the street and I helped her pick them up. She thanked me and offered me a nickel, but I told her it could happen to anyone and I was glad I came along. Maybe our league could sing carols for her next Christmas, or even do something sooner. Then Mom had a few errands for me. Guess I can't expect an allowance if I don't help around the house. Dad told

me that accepting responsibility proved to your parents that you're mature. Maybe there's some truth in that. They did let me borrow the car last Sunday to pick up some kids for church, and Thursday I took my date to the ball game in the car. Whoops! That's Mom. Supper's ready and play practice starts in 30 minutes. You know, Old Mirror, I don't see the handsomest boy in the world when I look into you—freckles, big nose, and floppy ears—but, like Mom always says, "It's what's on the inside that counts." So long, Pal!

HOW GROWN UP ARE YOU?

PERSONALITY TEST

Each person should be given pencil and paper and mark the answer a, b, or c as the leader reads the questions. They should not put names on the papers and should grade their own. Everyone must be honest if he is to learn what kind of personality he has.

1. At home I
 - a. help but complain
 - b. help when I'm told to do something
 - c. help without being told
2. At home I
 - a. pout when things don't go my way
 - b. often lose my temper
 - c. talk over disagreements with my family
3. As for money, I
 - a. get money anytime I want it simply by asking
 - b. borrow money when I need to
 - c. budget my allowance, trying to save for special occasions
4. At school, I
 - a. love to hear and repeat gossip
 - b. gossip only with my best friends
 - c. never say things that are unkind about others
5. My friends are
 - a. much younger
 - b. much older
 - c. about my age
6. When someone tells me a secret, I
 - a. tell many people, but tell them not to tell
 - b. tell only my best friends
 - c. tell no one
7. Most people
 - a. think I am better than I really am
 - b. think I am worse than I really am
 - c. know what I am really like
8. I feel
 - a. terrible with a boy (if you're a girl) or girl (if you're a boy)
 - b. a little ill at ease with the opposite sex
 - c. quite natural and at ease with both boys and girls
9. After school, I
 - a. study never
 - b. study sometimes before a test
 - c. study daily

0. I cheat
 - a. only when I think I'm going to fail
 - b. anytime I don't have my homework
 - c. never
1. I belong to
 - a. no clubs or organizations
 - b. one club
 - c. several interest groups (as boy scouts, girl scouts, 4-H, sports, music club, others)
2. On a date, or in a group, I talk
 - a. almost all the time
 - b. never
 - c. about average
3. My vocabulary (word understanding and use) is:
 - a. average for my age
 - b. low for my age
 - c. excellent for my age
4. My clothes are
 - a. sloppy
 - b. average
 - c. neat and clean though not always the most expensive
5. I visit the sick, remember birthdays, welcome strangers, participate in clothing drives:
 - a. never
 - b. about once a year
 - c. often
6. I attend church
 - a. never
 - b. occasionally
 - c. regularly
7. I pray and read the Bible
 - a. never
 - b. occasionally
 - c. daily
8. When there is a question as to what is the right thing to do, I think
 - a. group should decide by vote
 - b. toss a coin—heads, we do . . . tails, we don't
 - c. each person should follow his individual conscience
9. Talking about Christ or the Church in a group
 - a. embarrasses me
 - b. only stirs up arguments
 - c. is as natural a part of conversation as baseball
10. I think older people are
 - a. just old-fashioned
 - b. bossy and nosey
 - c. more experienced and able to offer good advice

(SCORE: In all cases, "c" is the best answer. If you have 18-20 marked "c," you're on your way toward becoming a mature personality. 12-17 marked "c" means you need improvement. Find your weaknesses. Are they mental, moral, social, physical, or spiritual? If you had below 12 marked "c" you are not grown-up for your age and your personality isn't developing as it should. Maybe you can improve by seeking the guidance of a competent person, as your pastor, teacher or parent.)

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Discussion should follow. Let the leaguers tell how each person could improve his personality, if they think it needs improving and why Joe leaguer will probably be successful.

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:41-52

HYMN SUGGESTIONS (from new Service Book and Hymnal): "O God, Accept My Heart This Day," 289; "Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying," 59; "Thy Life Was Given for Me," 513; "O Jesus, I Have Promised," 515; "Saviour, Like a Shepherd," 524; "Savior, Teach Me, Day by Day," 528; "Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me," 531; "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee."

JEREMIAH:

How to Worship

bible study

by JOHN HALVORSON

INTRODUCTION (Leaguer 1)

(Draw a large map of the ancient Near East.)

Jeremiah lived about 600 years before the birth of Jesus. This may seem like a long time ago; but already at that time Jerusalem had had a long history and within its walls there were some considerable buildings. One of the most impressive was the Temple with its outer court. For about 300 years, people had worshipped here. This Temple with its service was to be the means and agency by which God would accomplish and carry forward His great purpose among men.

To point out the proper place of the Temple and the significance of worship in this period of history, it will be necessary to raise the question: *What is God's purpose among men?* Even before the Temple was built, God acted down in Egypt and delivered a large number of slaves from oppression with Moses as their leader. To these people, God said through Moses: "If you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession . . . and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:5, 6).

The Temple was to serve this great purpose of God. Through its service, God was anxious to create for His own possession a holy nation and a kingdom of priests. The temple was never to be an end in itself but rather a means toward this greater end and purpose of God.

STUDY (Leaguer 2)

(Every leaguer should be asked in advance to bring an RSV copy of the entire Bible. The speaker will invite them to turn to the book of Jeremiah and find chapter seven. This Bible study will center around the first 15 verses of the chapter.)

In the course of his ministry, Jeremiah became convinced that his countrymen had misunderstood completely the purpose of the Temple and its service. They had forgotten about the great and ultimate purpose of God and made the Temple an end in itself. Within the walls of Jerusalem was the Temple, and within the Temple the presence of God dwelt. For this reason the notion became popular that no danger would ever come to the holy city and to the people who could crowd together within its walls and keep some contact with the Temple.

(Read together the first four verses of the chapter. It might be most effective if the speaker would read one verse and invite the group to read the next verse in unison.)

The great purpose of God within the pages of the Old Testament is to create for His own possession a holy nation and a kingdom of priests. For this reason, it will be necessary that these people have a land on which to dwell. As a matter of fact, one of the promises to Abraham of old was that God would give him and his people a land. If these people embraced the Covenant purpose of God with their whole heart and life, God would sustain them. But on the other hand, if they should defy the demands of God, when they would lose their most vital security. The prophet speaks his own convictions on this matter in verses 5-7.

(Read silently the brief paragraph.)

Jeremiah is convinced that his countrymen have offended God as nothing else could have done by the way they have worshiped Him. At their festival services, they assembled within the Temple and confessed with the top of the head only: "We are delivered." In the language of the Christian Church today, this is to confess simply: "I believe in God." But Jeremiah's countrymen have proceeded to live in the ordinary circumstances of life as if God were dead. They steal, commit adultery and burn incense to other gods. They have not lived their faith in life itself. On occasion, the Temple has been

given to strange usages. Jeremiah is convinced that to the Lord it has assumed the appearance of a den of robbers.

(Read silently verses 8-11 before continuing.)

When the people of Israel first settled upon the land of Palestine, their central place of worship was at Shiloh. Here the Tabernacle was located and the very first Temple was built. After some years, the people began to worship the Lord at Shiloh with the top of the head, and to live as if God were dead. They forgot that the demands of God were addressed to the total man in all areas of life.

So the Lord chose to carry forward His purpose at the moment by means of a judgment. The Temple was destroyed and its remains were still to be found at Shiloh in Jeremiah's day. Something very similar also had happened to the northern kingdom, which was called Ephraim by the prophets. The conquest of Ephraim by the Assyrians was a vivid memory to Jeremiah's countrymen. Now it was the city state of Babylon which had assumed the place of Assyria on the political horizon. Jeremiah is convinced that the only way God can accomplish His purpose among men is to permit Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to inflict a judgment upon Jerusalem and destroy the holy city and its Temple. In verses 12-15 Jeremiah speaks this offensive message of judgment. *(These verses should now be read carefully by the leaguers and the speaker together. It may be well to read them a second time so as to follow the thought of the prophet.)*

CONCLUSION (Leaguer 3)

The response on the part of those who heard Jeremiah's Temple address was what we might expect. The dramatic incident is recorded in chapter 26. This means that the arrangement of chapters in the present book of Jeremiah is not chronological (in a time sequence) but rather by topics.

The priests and popular Temple prophets insisted that Jeremiah be put to death at once because of his offensive message. Certain members of the royal

court, however, spoke up in his defense. They argued on the basis of a similar incident in the life of Micah, who was a contemporary of Isaiah and lived about 100 years earlier. Micah also had predicted that Jerusalem would be destroyed because his countrymen had defied the demands of God. At that time, King Hezekiah took the message to heart. So the members of the royal court argued: "This is also what we should do in our day."

As we turn to the New Testament, we meet the tremendous message that the end of history, as the prophets understood it, has already broken in upon us. This end of history is the New Age which broke in upon us when Christ Jesus came into this world. In chapters three and four of Hebrews, this New Age is called also the sabbath rest. This New Testament epistle as well as other portions of Scripture make it clear that all of life is to be a worship of God. As believers we are to worship and glorify God with our bodies and minds in all we do. (*Read Matthew 5:16.*)

This means that as other people see you in the drug store, they will say secretly to themselves: "This Christ that Tom and Martha believe in must be pretty big. Look at how He affects their lives!"

Men and women whose lives are being affected by the risen Lord of the Church today make up the holy nation which God is anxious to create for His own possession. To fulfill God's purpose in our life is to worship God in a vital and positive way.

This Bible study has sought to emphasize an aspect of worship which is neglected frequently. The church is confronted at every moment with the danger that formal and public worship (the services) may become an end in itself. The best precaution against this danger is intelligent and reflective participation in the order of service.

It takes effort on your part to get something out of the Sunday morning service. Basically two things take place in our authorized orders of service. In the first

place, God speaks to us through the Word. It may be the declaration of forgiveness, the lessons of Scripture or the message which the pastor speaks. These parts are called the *sacramental* aspects of the service. Then there are the several parts in the service where we speak to God—through song, confession and prayer. At these moments, the pastor usually faces the altar. These are the *sacrificial* parts of the service.

WORSHIP LAB (Leaguer 4)

This person should be prepared to lead a discussion on the order of public worship liturgical service as used by the local congregation on Sunday morning. Copies as contained in your service book should be passed out to every leaguer. Then go through the service in its regular sequence and ask the group: "Is this a sacramental part of the service? Does God speak to us here? Or is this one of the sacrificial parts of the service?" It might be effective to conclude the program by going through an extended portion of this familiar public worship service as a group. Let this laboratory session on worship forms be the concluding worship of your program.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

To discover through study of Jeremiah 7:1-4 some answers to these questions:

1. Is the orderly worship of the temple in the Old Testament and of the church in the New Israel an end in itself?
2. Does worship on Sunday morning satisfy the demands of God?
3. Does God have an even greater purpose than that His people worship Him?
4. What is God's main purpose, in Jeremiah's day and in ours?
5. If the worship "service" is not an end in itself, how is it a means toward accomplishing the purpose of God?

It is suggested that you use four leaguers. Each youth will discover that there are instructions interwoven in his section of the program material. The first will briefly introduce the subject. The second is responsible for guiding the Bible study. The third Leaguer will summarize and conclude the Bible study. For purposes of discussion, this speaker should raise the questions which this Bible study seeks to answer—"Purpose." The fourth leaguer will relate the study to worship in our day. The laboratory worship suggested at the end should be led by him.



SUNDAY GO-TO- MEETIN'- TIME

this topic on worship etiquette will be a good follow-up to the immediately preceding topic on "How We Worship"

What Is Worship?

(Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 (RSV) as an opening Scripture lesson.)

This Scripture helps us to establish the right attitudes in worship. There probably are many people who do not experience great awe the minute they step inside the church sanctuary. We have to remind ourselves that we are entering the Lord's house and have come to worship him. This fact need not discourage us, because as we grow in Christ, as we learn more about worship and as we have more worship experiences, our love for God will grow and we will grow, so that worship becomes a natural, much needed expression of our Christian faith.

Worship in our church is a public confession of our faith in Christ and an expression of our devotion to Him. When we go to church on Sunday morning we are confessing to all who see us go *and to ourselves*, that we need the spiritual food which we will receive there, that we are sinful and in need of a Savior, and that we believe in Christ Jesus as our Redeemer.

by ELEANOR BOCKELMAN

In the portion of Ecclesiastes which was read we are warned against "formalism" in worship. This means going through all the motions of worshipping but not putting our heart into it—such as hearing the Word of God, but not trying to understand it, or reading a prayer instead of praying it, or running off at the mouth in our prayers, thinking that we can make up for the poor quality of our prayers by much praying. We also are reminded that we are mere earth-beings and therefore are to be humble in the presence of God. Humility is a must in true worship.

Discuss the question: "Why don't I experience a feeling of awe when I come to church?" Some of the thoughts to be brought out in the discussion of this question are: Perhaps we have forgotten that God Himself is present in our worship (Matt. 18:20). It is not surprising that we don't feel awe, because we are young and human, and we are reminded again that we need the help of the Holy spirit. Certain conditions in our congregation or building may be distracting from or destroying the worship feeling. If so, discuss what can be done about it.

Pantomimes

Arrange two rows of chairs to represent pews in the church. Do not make big productions of these, but have the leaguers take the places quickly and quietly. After each pantomime, take time to discuss the situation presented.

Pantomime 1

Have four leaguers seated in the two rows of chairs like this:

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1 2 3 x x
x 4 x x x

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A fifth person comes in, quietly seats himself next to 3, bows his head in silent prayer. Then all leaguers open hymnals and pretend to be singing a hymn, showing that the service has started. Along

comes Mr. Latecomer, who sits beside 4 and then obviously can't find a hymnal. All others ignore him as he tries to see the words of the hymn. Girls are wearing hats, boys are not. Now ask what's *good* and what's *bad* in this scene—those participating in the pantomime should join in the discussion.

Hints for Discussion: Getting to the service on time, so that the person comfortably seated, hymnal open and ready, will help to make worship real. All worship should be opened with silent prayer. The first ones to sit in the pew should go to the center, so latecomers can be seated without having to climb over an "end block." Someone should have handed a hymnal to the latecomer as the hymn being sung. It's a simple matter to cue in a latecomer to the place in the service. But latecomers always disturb the other worshippers. Ladies wear hats to church to show their respect. Discuss what kind of clothing is appropriate: Sport shirts? Sneakers? Slacks or shorts at Bible camp worship services? What about make-up?

Pantomime 2

Seat seven or more Leaguers in the pew chairs, some in front and the rest in back. There should be at least one couple (5, 6).

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x 1 2 3 4
x x 5 6 7

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Announce that this action is taking place during the sermon. Leaguer 1 (a girl) leans forward and by various means tries to get the attention of the girl at the opposite end of the row, 4. When she finally gets her eye, she mouths the words, "Do you have a date for Leaguers tonight?" without making a sound, and the two continue a silent conversation. Leaguer 2 tries valiantly to concentrate on the sermon. Leaguers 3 and 7 pass notes back and forth. Leaguers 5 and 6, the couple, are holding hands under cover

of a hymnal and whisper to each other. If you have additional leaguers, one could be checking his watch every few minutes, another could be writing. Another would slump in his pew, dozing.

Hints for Discussion: The misbehavior in this picture is obvious, but all too common. The "silent conversationalists" are much too "loud"—they annoy everyone around them. Can't it wait until after church? Neither note-writing nor love-making belong in the pew. Who is getting the attention, God or lover-boy? Clock watchers do not shorten long sermons. Is it true that it is expecting too much of teenagers to sit through a worship service because they can't concentrate for that long? Is Saturday night the time for a late date?

Pantomime 3

Again seat a number of leaguers in the pew chairs. This time, it does not matter how they are seated. For a short time let the pantomimers run the gauntlet of common discourtesies: cleaning fingernails, sneezing without covering up with a hanky, the nose or ear borer, the hair fusser—constantly twirling curls around her finger, doodling in the hymnal, dropping the hymnal onto the pew with a thump, accidentally knocking awry the hat on a lady in the front row by carelessly dangling a purse. And then the leader should announce that it is time in the imaginary service for the closing prayer, the benediction and the recessional. One leaguer should sneak out just before the recessional. Someone closes his hymnal with a bang. Another person struggles with his coat during the recessional.

Hints for Discussion: Many of the things pantomimed here are improper behavior anywhere, and they are after all little things. But if they are improper anywhere, they are even more so in church where we are supposed to be worshipping. Why the hurry to leave? Is it a matter of not being able to wait to get out of God's house? After the recessional in most churches, the acolyte

extinguishes the altar candles and there is a time for brief prayer. Coats, gathering up boots, gloves, purses, etc., can wait until the service is really over.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

The leader will present a short talk on what worship is and why we worship. The leader will call on the pantomime groups. Then the whole league will discuss the rights and wrongs presented in the pantomime. At the conclusion of the meeting ask the group to go quietly into the sanctuary for a five-minute worship service.

After each pantomime give the group time to discuss the situations presented. The "hints for discussion" are intended for the leader so that he can call attention to anything that may be missed in the discussion. These hints are not to be read to the group.

While this program will be fun, caution should be taken to keep it from becoming ridiculous.

In planning the more formal worship portion of this program, to be held in the sanctuary at the close instead of at the beginning as is customary, the leader should be sure to consult his pastor.

As the meeting adjourns to the sanctuary the leader might say something like this: "We have spent this evening talking about worship and our proper conduct during a service. We are now going into the sanctuary for our closing worship, putting into practice those good manners we have talked about. Let us go in single file, silently, bowing our heads in silent prayer as we sit down."

We recommend that the pastor conduct this closing service, but all Leaguers will participate.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP—O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker. (Ps. 95:6)

SCRIPTURE—Psalm 84 (in unison)

HYMNS—"Beautiful Saviour;" "I Love Thy Zion, Lord;" "God Is in His Temple;" other hymns which speak of worship. (Use at least two.)

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS—This would be a good opportunity for sentence prayers, with each Leaguer praying for what is on his heart and mind. If your church is equipped with kneelers, use them for the prayer period. If not, ask the Leaguers to be seated in the pews and to place their hands, palms up, on their knees and then instead of bowing their heads this time, ask them to look up as they pray.

THE BENEDICTION

THE DAY THE TRUCK KILLED GOD

a study of the five divisions

CHRISTIAN VOCATION

Once upon a starless night there was an owl who sat on the branch of an oak tree. Two ground moles tried to slip quietly by, unnoticed. "You!" said the owl.

"Who?" they quavered, in fear and astonishment, for they could not believe it was possible for anyone to see them in that thick darkness.

"You two!" said the owl. The moles hurried away and told the other creatures of the field and the forest that the owl was the greatest and wisest of all animals because he could see in the dark and because he could answer any question.

"I'll see about that," said a secretary bird, and he called upon the owl one night when it was very dark. "How many claws am I holding up?" said the secretary bird.

"Two," said the owl, and that was right.

"Can you give me another expression for 'that is to say' or 'namely'?" asked the secretary bird.

"To wit," said the owl.

"Why does a lover call on his lover?" asked the secretary bird.

"To woo," said the owl.

The secretary bird hastened back to the other creatures and reported that the owl was indeed the greatest and wisest animal in the world because he could see in the dark and because he could answer any question.

"Can he see in the daytime, too?" asked the red fox.

"Yes," echoed a doormouse and a French poodle. "Can he see in the daytime, too?" All the creatures laughed

loudly at this silly question, and they sent upon the red fox and his friends and drove them out of the region. Then the owl sent a messenger to the owl and asked him to be their leader.

When the owl appeared among the animals it was high noon and the sun was shining brightly. He walked very slowly, which gave him an appearance of great dignity, and he peered about him with large, staring eyes, which gave him an air of tremendous importance.

"He's God!" screamed a Plymouth Rock hen. And others took up the cry, "He's God!"

So they followed him wherever he went and when he began to bump into things they bumped into things, too. Finally he came to a concrete highway and he started up the middle of it and all the other creatures followed him. Presently a hawk, who was acting as an owl rider, observed a truck coming at them at fifty miles an hour, and he reported to the secretary bird and the secretary bird reported to the owl.

"There's danger ahead," said the secretary bird.

"To wit?" said the owl.

The secretary bird told him. "Are you afraid?" he asked.

"Who?" said the owl calmly, for he could not see the truck.

"He's God!" cried all the creatures again, and they were still crying "He's God!" when the truck hit them and ran them down. Some of the animals were merely injured, but most of them, including the owl, were killed.

("The Owl Who Was God" from James Thurber's *Fables for Our Time*. Harper Brothers, New York; 1949.)

Discussion

Everyone must decide whom he will follow. When the animals in our story elected to follow the owl they made their decision a bit too hastily. What things did they overlook? Are some of the things which we follow subject to faults (the crowd, opposite sex, money, TV)? Do these things call with a louder voice than Christ? The owl's life was lost because of his blindness; if we are not blind will we choose the crowds, etc. or Christ as more important and longer lasting? Other subjects: difference between vocation (call) and occupation (job), how to best hear God's call.

Summary

A person has no business acting like an active member of the church if he does not try to be a "little Christ" (Martin Luther's definition of Christian). We know that saying yes to Christ's call to be a Christian is just the beginning. Christian vocation, which is this call by God, means that a person will seek God's guidance in prayer and regular devotions, consider carefully in what occupation God wants him to serve, and pledge his time, talents, and abilities to do God's will. Soon he will realize that it is impossible to keep the joy of his faith to himself.

EVANGELISM

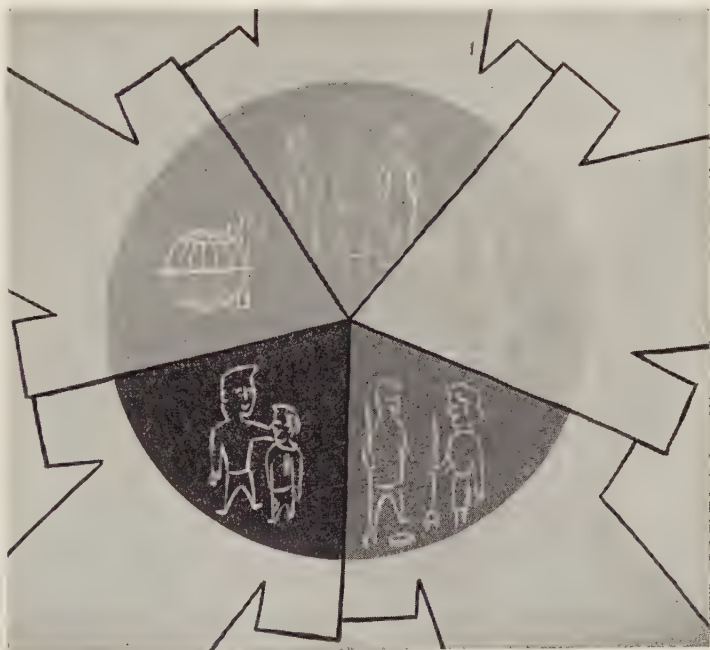
It was 11:15 when Fred got home. (He was supposed to be in at 11:00.) He tiptoed upstairs without waking his

parents, slowly opened the door to his room, stealthily crept in, closed the door quietly, reached for the light switch. A voice said, "Well, what was she like?"

When he stopped shaking he told himself that he must remember next time that little brothers are never asleep when they're supposed to be and are always prying into a young man's affairs. This time he didn't mind too much, though, because the date he'd had with Joan was just about the best he'd had in his whole life. He was eager to tell all about her to anyone who would listen.

"She's swell! We talked about school and movies and stuff. She likes to chew gum almost as much as I do. We got hamburgers after the show; she didn't even eat too much."

"Oh," responded brother Tom flatly. "Her older sister goes to the same



college where I want to go and neither of us likes Lawrence Welk and her eyes are a real pretty blue—both of them. Do you like blue eyes, Tom? . . . Tom?" . . . Now he goes to sleep! I guess I didn't describe her too well. If he could meet her, then he'd know what I mean.

Discussion

Is religion one of the subjects on which you have difficulty expressing yourself? How hard do you try? Is it possible to introduce others to Christ through you or must each person find Him without any assistance? Must we speak to others specifically about our faith or is setting an example enough? Other subjects: are membership drives selfish? the evangelism program of the whole congregation, P.W. (personal witness).

Summary

"... he that loveth not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?" The Christian must share his religious experience during his every moment. Each action is looked upon as a test. It has been said that a Christian lives in a fishbowl. One of his greatest opportunities is to show in all that he does how real his faith is to him. But that is far from enough. What about the millions of people in the world who need Christ but who might never even meet him?

MISSIONS

The children's shadows hurried along behind them as they moved down the pathway from the school building. Everyone appeared to be glad that this was the last class day until fall—everybody except one sad-faced boy who waited outside the door for his teacher. The teacher knew what he wanted; this was one of the many fourth-graders (four out of five) who couldn't come back to school again in the fall because there wouldn't be room in the small overcrowded building.

"I-I know I can't go to the fifth grade," stammered the boy, "but rather than quit I want to do my fourth grade work again. I'll never have a chance for more education."

The teacher had to say no because the fourth grade room is overcrowded with fourth graders. As the child's shadow plodded after him on his sad way

home the teacher couldn't avoid remembering something he'd read some time before: that a year's education for a child here in Tanganyika, Africa, can be provided for seventy cents in American money.

Discussion

What can I do about missions? missions less important than evangelism? How can I give my money where it will do the most good? Define home missions, overseas missions. What occupational opportunities are there in mission fields? Where can we get materials for interesting mission study? Other subjects: current CM themes.

Summary

Our love for Christ must overflow everyone. To work through prayers and contributions we must be informed; "I go we must know." Using the many materials available we learn of the obstacles to missionary work and of the very slow progress being made. By telling others of the need and by responding to it ourselves we follow Christ's command to "preach the gospel to every creature."

SOCIAL ACTION

Betty continued talking. She noticed out of the corner of her eye that her mother was standing in the doorway. She knew that she couldn't have been talking to Ruth on the telephone for more than an hour and there was so much to say. What she'd heard about Sue Riley cheating in the history exam just had to be told. Ruth might even know whether it was true. Her mother would just have to wait. Why couldn't she wait somewhere else.

"Of course," Betty began, "I wouldn't say anything about Sue unless I could say something good. And, oh boy, is that good . . ."

Discussion

Social Action is concerned with Christian action on problems in society. Is gossip one of these problems? What was wrong with Betty's attitude? Name other areas of social ter

tion. Do we have any responsibility in problems that don't affect us directly in the areas where we live (example: race relations in an all-white town)? What is the reason for our concern for society's problems? Other subjects: Name the four steps in solving a social action problem. Name social action's six areas of concern. What characteristics must a project have to make it a service project?

Summary

Social Action is making the procedure of religion a vital power to use in areas of social tension. It is Christian love reacting on the problems of society-building Christian homes, stopping harmful gossip, helping people of other races, guiding honest government, preventing crime by providing a wholesome outlet for the energies of youth. Christians can do no less than this in answering God's call when they see social injustices.

RECREATION

"Hey, mom!" shouted Ralph from his bedroom, "is this shirt dirty?"

"Yes," came the reply without a moment's hesitation. "Put on a clean one."

Ralph walked to the head of the stairs with a puzzled look on his face. "Now just a minute. You didn't even see the shirt. How can you be so sure it isn't clean?"

"Had it been clean you wouldn't have asked me. You'd have known. If it's doubtful, it's dirty."

Discussion

If a certain type of recreation is doubtful must we assume that it's dirty? Can the Christian afford to take the chance that it might be dirty? What's different about Christian recreation? In what ways might it build self confidence and leadership ability? Name as many types of Christian recreation as you can. Other subjects: Name examples of different types of songs, of games. What are source materials where games and songs can be found?

Summary

Christian recreation is the joyful exercise of body, mind, and spirit. It provides refreshment from routine duties, a break from studies, a character building experience. It encourages cooperative activity and demonstrates the Christian's optimistic viewpoint. In recreation the Christian gives even his leisure time to Christ.

Discussion of Discussions

(See LLA Handbook for helpful materials). Define the divisions of the five fold program. What is the difference between evangelism and missions? Why is CV first? Why is recreation last? Who are the LLA chairmen for each of the five committees (see inside back cover of HIGH IDEALS). What is the address of the LLA office?

Summary of Summaries

How tall are you against the yard stick of the five fold program? Does your Christian love express itself in all five areas? Check your league program against this measuring device: if your topics regularly cover the five divisions your program emphasis is complete.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

You will want to spend at least two weeks on this topic to give sufficient time for thorough discussion. Find good readers to read the stories. The effectiveness of the program will depend on the discussion leader. The more experienced he is with the five-fold program the better his contribution will be. Try to get a former LLA or synodical caravaner or a conference or synodical officer.

To the Discussion Leader

The stories are provided to stimulate discussion. You must direct the verbal traffic using the discussion questions as road signs. Try to lead the group to some of the conclusions stated in the summaries.

Fortify yourself with extra material (see Luther Life and HIGH IDEALS indexes, and the LLA handbook, \$2.50 from the Philadelphia office). Assimilate this information and then use it at appropriate points in the discussion. Remember that you must be an authority on a subject before you can teach it.

SIGNPOST FOR GOOD TOPICS

here's a topic
to help you prepare topics

by
CAROL DAILY
GWEN ELLSWORTH
KATHY KEENER
SALLY McCAHAN

PLAN AHEAD

This way, leaguers, when you have the topic! Take a good look at the topic a month before you give it. Why? So you can plan ahead. So you'll be ready to give a topic with a message that hits. You know, you will even look forward to giving the topic.

READ - THINK

It's a good idea to read the topic material with a pencil in your hand. Mark and underline that word, sentence, paragraph that struck you as important. Now picture your leaguers before you. Ask yourself, "What will this mean to the leaguers?" "What does this mean to me?" "Could I tell the main ideas in my own words?" If you can, you have mastered the first step in good preparation.

As you read and think about this topic, pray about it. Being a topic leader is very important. Pray as you prepare yourself. Pray that Christ may prepare the leaguers who come to hear your topic.

Do you want other leaguers to hear you? If so, then ask them about two or three weeks before the meeting. Asking someone to help at the last minute is unfair to them. Besides, you will get a dozen excuses if you wait until the last minute.

Arouse interest! Now is the time to plan your publicity. If you believe in your topic, other people will wonder



What shall I do?
I have the topic
at League!

A GUIDEPOST FOR GOOD TOPICS



There are two
ways to do it!

BORING, USELESS MEETING

INTERESTING, MEANINGFUL MEETING

DON'T PLAN

PLAN AHEAD

JUST READ

READ-THINK

HOPE IT WORKS

OUTLINE

DON'T PRACTICE

PRACTICE

STUMBLE THROUGH

PRESENT WELL

FORGET IT

EVALUATE

What's in it and who will want to learn about it too. Begin your publicity about two or three weeks before the meeting. Publicity can include bright and attractive posters, announcements in the church bulletin and paper, displays and just plain "talking" it up. (Example of displays are a model airplane for a foreign mission topic or an open Bible for the Bible study.) A worthwhile topic is worth announcing!

OUTLINE

Now work out a definite plan you can follow. Think about the room arrangement. Plan a worship center (if you're in charge of worship). Make a list of the supplies you will need: hymnals, Bibles, pencils, paper, offering

plates. If you have a definite plan, you will feel more confident. If you have a plan you know where you are going!

I. The Kick Off!

Props—Plan to get your leaguers' attention—not by standing in front of the group, waving your arms and shouting! One good way to get their attention is by the use of props. Use the evening newspaper, write the key word or words on the blackboard or a large sheet of paper, sketch a picture—(just a stickman will do, or some thing related to your topic), show an object.

Introduction—Think of an original introduction. Plan a short skit. Tell a story. Ask a catchy question. Use the tape recorder or a record to set the mood . . . the latest hit record if you are going to talk about "What to do on a date." Outline your topic on the blackboard. The leaguers can see as well as hear what you are talking about. Don't be afraid to use some fun in your "kick off."

II. Put Across the Message and Keep the Leaguers Interested

In preparing your topic remember that you must help the leaguers feel that they are part of the topic by giving them something to do, or by making them think.

Use facts and ideas from the topic material. How do you get leaguers to think about the topic? One way is to present new and interesting facts. Pick out the facts which particularly interest you. When you give these facts to the leaguers, let them know that you are interested.

Dig for new information on the subject. Other places to look for information are encyclopedias, books from your church and school library, Luther League files, old issues of HIGH IDEALS and *Luther Life*, newspapers, and magazines. Don't overlook your own experiences as an important source of information. There are many things that you have learned that could be related to the topic. Illustrations of things which you have seen or heard will catch the interest of the leaguers.

You could plan to bring books to the

meeting and let the leaguers find the information for themselves and report on it. They are more likely to remember the things they look up than the things which you tell them.

Ask questions to make them think. Questions about what they believe and why they believe it, are especially good. See if you can find different answers to the same question. Be ready to point out something good about all answers unless they are completely wrong.

Try a different method—Role Playing. If you use the same method every time you give a topic, the leaguers probably won't listen to your information even if it is new and interesting. You won't have a chance! One way to get variety is to use role playing. You never use it? Suppose you give it a try. Ask your pastor or adviser to help you. Here are some steps. If you follow these, I'm sure your group will take part.

A. Decide What the Problem Is. This should be a familiar one to your group. Suppose the topic is "How can we get more young people interested in our league meetings?" That's right, put the problem into words. Be sure also that you will be able to act out the problem in three to seven minutes.

B. Get the Role Players. No one would volunteer in your league? Then find your players before league. Avoid using more than three to five players. The action must be brief and each player must fill some important role. Let's say that you decided to role play a visit to a home in which there is a young person who is not interested in league. Two leaguers are chosen to call on the home, and a third youth is chosen to be the indifferent youth. After the role playing each of the players should be prepared to explain why he acted and spoke as he did.

C. Prepare to Role Play. Avoid giving any hint as to what the players should say or do. Don't write a script. The secret of role playing is to act on the spur of the moment. Make it clear just how many players are involved and what roles they are to play. Ask the players to get together, away from the group

or a few minutes to talk over their parts. Now you have your cast. What next? Give the audience something to do. (Example: How are the players solving the problem? Look for comments each player makes. In the light of Christ's teachings how should this problem be solved?)

D. *The Action.* Explain the situation once more. Remind the players to keep in their roles. Don't let the cast get off the subject or start "hamming it up." The players and the group should try to put themselves in the other person's shoes," to "get inside" the other person's problems and feel as he may feel in a given situation.

E. *Cut Off the Action.* The scene should be cut off at the point where enough has been presented so that the group can analyze the problem and imagine what their own reactions and conclusions might be. By all means, the scene should be cut if the players react themselves. You, the leader, will do the "cutting."

F. *Discussion and Replaying.* You may ask the players, "How do you feel about the problem?" or "Why did you react as you did?" Ask the audience to discuss the questions they were given. Frequently discussions lead to the replaying of the scene with the same or other role players. Try to help the group understand they should not have any fixed ideas on how a situation should end.

Check these methods. These will add variety to your meeting:

Debate	Brainstorming
Panel	Check-lists
Interviews	Pantomime
Book reviews	Research teams
Chalk talks	Puppets
Dramas	Exhibits
Demonstrations	Charts
Field trips	Films
Pageants	Slides
Discussion	Filmstrips
Skits	Records
Buzz groups	Tape recordings

III. End it!

Whoa! Where do you think you are going? You are not through planning

your topic yet. You have come to another important step. Ask yourself this question, "With what thoughts do I want my fellow leaguers to leave?" A summary will help you. The summary is telling briefly the message that your topic contains. You can use it to give more emphasis to the important points. How does one go about making a summary?—That is the next step.

Step ONE is to present all the main points of the topic—you can do this yourself, but it would be better to have your audience take part. The following methods can be used: ask them questions, have a quiz, play a game (divide the group into two teams, give points for the questions, the team with the most points wins). If you prefer to present the main points alone, be sure that your audience will be able to understand them clearly. This can best be done by listing them on the blackboard, using a flip chart, or presenting them by the use of posters.

Step TWO is your own written conclusion or ending that will give them a motive for going out and doing something. This statement may be a Scripture verse, a poem, or words from a famous man's speech. The best form is a brief statement in your own words.

PRACTICE

Just because you've planned ahead and are doing something different doesn't mean your topic will be successful. You still have one more thing to do before the time of the meeting. You guessed it. You better practice (at least one week before presenting the topic).

Yes, that's what I said, *practice out loud*. The natural thing is for some one to listen to you and help you improve. As he is listening ask him to check you on these things: (1) pronunciation and the meaning of big words; (2) the expression on your face—a happy one shows how you feel about the topic; (3) is this the best way to arrange your material? (4) can you hear me? Of

course, you'll be doing this in the same place and way you would for the whole league. Have all supplies handy.

PRESENT WELL

Now it's time for you to present your topic. Show your enthusiasm, the fact that you care that your topic "goes," and your hope the leaguers get something out of it, by coming early to the meeting place. You can make sure the room is comfortable, well ventilated and lighted. Arrange the chairs and tables the way you want them. Distribute books and pamphlets if you are using any. Talk with the worship and recreation and other leaders about "who comes when" on the program. Meet for prayer with others who are helping you. And finally, but most important, do your best to make this a good meeting.

If you want your group to be awake and listening, you must be alert and enthusiastic. Using pleasing gestures and facial expressions. Smile. Don't worry about yourself, your clothes or your speech; think of the leaguers and what they are learning. Look at them as much as possible. And talk loud enough that you can be heard. This all adds up to the same thing—you are happy about your topic, and you show it!

LOOK BACK

After you have presented your topic be sure to look back at what you have done. This looking back is called evaluating—what you did, how you did it, and what improvements could be made. It is important that you discuss this with your advisers or pastor for they have been selected to help your league. In talking it over with them, you learn what you have done wrong or right, and how you can improve the next time, or what you can do to help another leaguer in presenting a good topic.

Follow these good signs and you are sure to have good topics in your league meetings. Giving a topic is serious business, but it can be enjoyable and meaningful if you give it careful thought and prayerful planning.

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Present this topic as a skit. Prepare a road sign like the sketch. Place only the two top signs "This Way" pointing in opposite directions. Have someone come to the fork of the road acting disturbed and puzzled, not knowing which way to go after looking at both signs. Have two other people come up and ask the puzzled person what is bothering him. He can say that he has the topic for league and he doesn't know what to do. Have the one representing "wrong way" present his plan by reading what is on the sign, urging him to take that way. Then he places his marker on the sign. Have someone representing the "right way" present his direction in detail and place the marker on the sign post.

Ask your pastor, adviser or some other adult to present the "right way" to prepare a topic. Follow the given material as closely as possible, taking the wrong sign and then the right direction as you follow the topic material.

Under the "Outline Your Plan" use flip charts, posters or the blackboard to give the steps. Use as many props as possible to illustrate the points. When you come to role playing, pick a problem and do some practice role playing. You determine the decision of the "puzzled" person, but we hope he will be convinced to try the right way.

Be sure to encourage the rest of the leaguers to discuss this plan and how they can use it. Encourage each leaguer to follow this plan.

Mimeograph copies of the essential steps in the "Guide Post for Good Topics." Give them to future topic leaders.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

HYMNS "He Leadeth Me, O Blessed Thought" CYH-220, SBH-478; "Teach Me, My God and King" CYH-217; SBH-451; "Forth in Thy Name, O Lord, I Go" CYH-301, SBH-214; "O Gracious Father of Mankind" CYH-91.

SCRIPTURE Luke 14:28-32; 1 Corinthians 14:26-28; Hebrews 6:9-12; Colossians 3:12-17.

RESOURCE SUGGESTIONS

You Can't Be Human Alone, Margaret E. Kulich. "How to Use Role Playing"—Leadership Pamphlet #6. Check index of *Luther Life* on "Program Helps."

DON'T LET THE FIRE GO OUT

why do new people come
and then drop out?

by BEATRICE MYERS

ONE WAY TO DISCUSS THE EXAMPLES

WHY don't more leaguers come regularly? Sometimes we get all fired-up and go out and get new league members. In a few weeks this "fire" seems to go out. Many of those who have come only a few times may be absent now because they just didn't feel at home.

The purpose of this topic is to examine ways of making everyone feel at home in our league. To help get the discussion groups started, there are several examples listed below.

Divide the leaguers into three buzz groups, one for each example. There may be as few as two or three in a group or if the league is very, very small you may wish to remain in one group.

If you can find out ahead of time which buzz group each leaguer is especially interested in, this will greatly help the discussion.

After you have read each example, try to find solutions of your own. Then for further suggestions, turn to the end of the topic.



EXAMPLES FOR DISCUSSION

I. "SHY-GUY" GEORGE AND "WALL-FLOWER" FLOSSY

Can you imagine anyone being downright miserable at league meetings? Perhaps it sounds a bit ridiculous to you, but it could happen even in your league.

There are some kids who force themselves to a few league meetings. Upon arriving, there is that horrible feeling of having to meet other people and of having to open their mouths to talk. After all, there's nothing to talk about. Then that discussion time— forbid that they should ever have to say anything during discussion. And what if they should ever be asked to lead the topic!

And so the evening wears on. At recreation time these kids almost freeze in their tracks because they would love to participate in the activities, but they think that they are not like other kids. So there they stand, or sit, off in a corner, hoping no one will spot them.

Finally it's time to go home. Boy, are they glad! They already have made up their minds not to come back next week. Maybe never again, 'cause after all, they just don't feel at home.

1. If this case of shyness sounds unreal then discuss a case you know first hand. What are some of the things you've noticed about the shy person?

2. List (on the blackboard or by use of a crayon on a large sheet of paper on the wall), some helpful things which you in your league can start doing immediately to help the shy individual feel more at ease and at home (keeping in mind very specific people who need help).

3. Have a secretary of this buzz group make a list of the points so that they can be reported to the whole group.

4. Turn to the end of the topic for further suggestions.

II. "ONCE-IN-A-BLUE-MOON" MIKE

"Well, hi, *stranger*. We haven't seen you in ages." These might be your first

words to that "Once-in-a-blue-moon" Mike who has just shown up at league.

Of course, he's late just as he was the last time he came. He never talks to anyone and he picks a seat way back in the corner. Just why he never enters into the discussion also puzzles you. But the thing that really gets you is his looking at his wrist watch every few minutes.

You wonder about Mike. Why is it that he only comes when there is something special or when there is an all-out effort made to get kids out to league?

1. What is the main problem with these "once-in-a-blue-moon" Mikes?

2. How can we help this type of leaguer? List on the blackboard some definite things which you can do in your own league to make these kids feel more at home.

3. Have a "secretary" of the buzz group make a list of these points so that they can be reported to the whole league.

4. Turn to the end of the topic for further suggestions.

III. "SO WHAT" WILLIE

Yep, the "So What" Willies are no doubt most of you who come to almost every league meeting, do all the hard work, and fill the offices of the league.

It's usually folks like you who stick with the league long enough to see the "Once-in-a-blue-moon" Mikes and the shy guys and gals come and go.

Maybe you've beaten your brains out trying to figure out how to get new members in your league. Or maybe you've worn out a pair of shoes pounding the streets on an evangelism campaign, and you've talked yourself blue-in-the-face trying to make the league sound good to other young people.

So—for a few meetings you see some new leaguers. Then all of a sudden that's left is the same old gang again. You shrug your shoulders and mutter: "Oh well, so what?" "Why waste time worrying about those who won't come?"

1. List the reasons you feel it is (1) waste of time or (2) it is important to make others feel at home at every meeting.
2. Look at the list you have just made and decide how much of a "So What" Willie you are.
3. Have someone take notes of the points discussed in number one so that they can be reported to the whole league.
4. Turn to the end of the topic for further suggestions.

GROUP SUMMARIZATION

1. Have all the small groups come together with a list of their discussion points.
2. Have the secretary of each group report the findings.
3. Have the advisor or a leader summarize the findings so that you will have some definite points to act upon in order to improve your league. (Every leaguer should then be given a "pocket copy" of these points.)
4. You may wish to make a complete evaluation of your league by using the accompanying chart. List definite ways to improve the league so that its program will mean more to each one who comes.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

EXAMPLE 1

Your points under this example should answer the question, "How can we pull the shy ones into the program and activities of the league?"

1. Someone should take a very personal interest in the shy person and talk

with him about the league at school or some other place before he even brings "Shy-Guy" to a league meeting.

2. The first meeting that "Wall-Flower" attends, she should be brought by an active leaguer who may even provide transportation.

3. The shy person should be brought early to the room or place where the league is to meet. He should be shown around and told all about what you do and how you do it. (If you can't think of anything this includes, then maybe you have a rather dead league.)

4. Have the shy person meet the advisor before the meeting starts and by all means introduce him to some of the leaguers with whom he will feel most at ease.

5. Stick with the shy one throughout the evening. Explain any parts of the program which seem to confuse him.

6. Make sure this person has as good a time as possible the first meeting. Perhaps recreation time is the best time to help him enter into something. Or whatever he can do well will be the thing to get him "in on."

7. Make sure he is invited back by yourself and by others in the group. (Personal invitations mean so much more than a group invite by the president or advisor.)

8. If possible, get this shy person to talk with you about the league meeting at school or somewhere else. Try to get him to express his likes and dislikes. You may then be able to help him overcome

OUR PROGRAM	GREATEST WEAKNESSES AT PRESENT	HOW TO IMPROVE
Worship		
Topic or Discussion		
Ways We Serve Others		
Fellowship or Recreation		

some of the things which cause his shyness.

9. The same friend should bring "Shy-Guy" or "Wall-Flower" to the next meeting or the next several meetings until he or she feels completely at home.

EXAMPLE II

Your points under this example should answer the question, "How can we make all who come feel more welcome and at home in our league?"

1. Appoint several active and popular leaguers to be on the lookout at each meeting for new faces and "Once-in-a-blue-moon" Mikes.

2. This committee's job is to greet the new ones and those who come only occasionally. Make these kids feel important, show them around, let them in on things, and keep them active throughout the evening.

3. Call each person by his or her first name, or better yet, by his or her nickname.

4. Where people sit during the meeting is important. Make a circle or some arrangement of chairs so that each person feels that he belongs to the group. Make certain that everyone can hear and see what is going on.

5. Explain clearly at the beginning of the meeting what is going to take place throughout the evening.

6. Have interesting programs which have been planned well in advance.

7. Get everyone in some part of the discussion or program of the evening if they are interested in responding.

8. If there is someone not prepared for some part of the program (such as the offering), try not to make him feel embarrassed.

9. Make sure that each person who joins your group understands the real purpose of the group. (Fun and fellowship are and should be very important to young people. All league activities, however, should be used to increase and show one's belief in and love for Christ.)

10. Those who like to serve on committees and assume leadership should have a chance to do so.

EXAMPLE III

Your points on this example should answer, "Why is it important to make others feel at home in league?"

1. The most important reason for having any young person in league is to give him something which no secular youth organization offers. This is growth of his spiritual life—the salvation of his soul. The young person must be at home before he will be ready to receive what the league has to offer him spiritually.

2. Another reason we want other young people to join the league and be welcome enough to become active is to develop and maintain a large active group. A strong youth organization can be of great value to the church through the departments of Christian vocational evangelism, missions, social action and recreation.

3. We want to develop strong leadership for our youth group as well as for the church and community. Therefore leaguers must feel at home with us in order to stay and to develop leadership abilities.

4. Feeling at home in the Lutheran League group is a big step toward becoming active young members of the congregation.

THINGS TO DO

1. After the meeting, mimeograph "points cards" of the points you have listed for improving your league. You can add blocks on the cards so that you can check each week what points you did. The check list could be shown periodically at the meetings.

2. Take turns either as individuals or in teams visiting another league to get the feelings about what it is like to be new in a group. Also discuss what that group does to make you feel at home.

You may want to choose from these other methods of presenting the topic:

1. Drama—Have a different person take part of each type of individual in the example for discussion and then adjust the material so that it can be spoken in first person.

2. Debate—Use the question, "Are we really making our new leaguers feel at home?" The negative side can use the various things pointed out under SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION.

N and particular negative incidents which happened in the league. The positive side use the material listed under EXAMPLES OF DISCUSSION and specific positive incidents which have recently occurred in the league.

9. Interview—Have one leaguer interview another leaguer who takes the part of a person taken of in one of the examples. The interviewer and leaguer may take their questions and answers directly from the examples listed. When the interview is completed concerning one example, discuss it and then have two others present the next example by interview.

10. Who-Am-I Quiz—Present the material from example I, then II, and finally III, omitting the name such as "So What" Willie, etc. Just describe the person and then have the group think of a good name for this type of leaguer.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

Worship Center—At your center of worship have a spotlighted picture of young people gathered around Christ looking at Him. As the leaguers come to worship, have the music of the Luther League hymn being played on the radio or a record.

PRAYER (thanking God for the Luther League, for those who come and for the blessings of youth.)

LUTHER LEAGUE HYMN 236 CYH

SCRIPTURE—Psalm 100 (this can be done by several leaguers as a speech choir)

SOLO or HYMN "I Would Be True"

PRAYER

God make us a better Luther League.

May we feel we need one another

May we feel love for one another

May we be willing to forgive one another

May we learn how to work together better

May we learn how to play together

May we learn how to worship together.

Together may we use God's Word

Together may we grow in Christ

Together may we love all men

Together may we serve all men

Through Christ, our Lord,

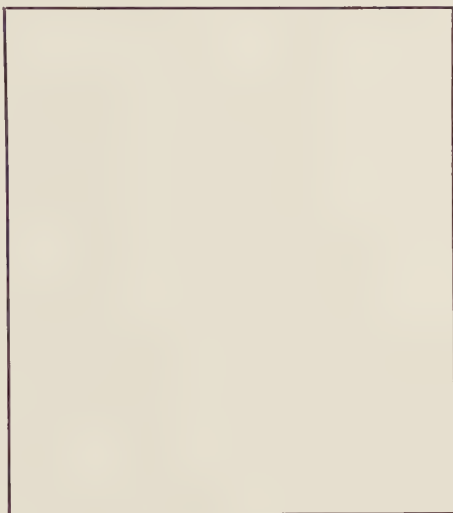
These are some of our hopes and ideals

Help us attain them, O God.

Amen

Perhaps for this meeting you could have mimeographed sheets for each leaguer of A SERVICE OF WORSHIP. In addition to your outline of the service on the sheet, you could have the words of your hymns.

Here's a blank space



do you look blank when—

—asked to plan a party?

—hunting material for devotions?

—choosing movies to see?

—seeking a quality magazine?

DON'T

Subscribe now

to

LUTHER LIFE
Luther League of America
 1900 Queen Lane
 Philadelphia 29, Pa.

A PRIMARY ENEMY

*a guiding statement on commercialism
prepared by the Luther League of America*

*use as information or a topic
something every leaguer should know*

Christian stewardship is the practice of a life dedicated to God through Jesus Christ. Recognizing the total claim which Christ has over his life, the Christian yields all that he *has* and *is* for service in God's kingdom. Included in this response is the use of his *time, ability, and money* for the proclamation of the Gospel. A primary enemy warring against his total response and threatening the practice of Christian stewardship is commercialism within the church.

Commercialism in the congregation or in its auxiliaries occurs when in the name of the church and of our Lord there is buying and selling of products or services through such events as fairs, bazaars, games of chance, car washes, sales and like enterprises. Festivals, suppers, baby sitting services, theatrical productions and similar activities are open to serious question when their purpose is raising money for the church.

The results of commercialism in the congregation are detrimental to the church, the community, and the personal lives of all who participate. Several reasons are:

1. Commercialism suggests a false purpose for the Church, that it is a business enterprise. The purpose of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel.
2. Commercialism exploits the name of Christ and His Church by causing members, as well as others, to feel an obligation to support such projects because a church organization endorses them.
3. Commercialism obscures the leaguer's sense of personal responsibility in his stewardship of money by transferring this personal responsibility to activities of the group.

4. Commercialism adds to a person's selfishness. He may fail to consider what God has done for him; and he may think he is doing something for God.
5. Commercialism tricks people into the satisfaction of thinking they are giving to Christ and His Church when they are receiving a product or service in exchange for their money.
6. Commercialism reflects lack of trust in God, in that those who resort to its practices are afraid that worthy projects will fail if supported solely by free-will giving.

Whenever a project is too large to be financed by free-will giving, it is a questionable project for a league because its good purpose is outweighed by wrong fund-raising methods. In the consideration of any project, these questions should be asked:

1. Will this project obviously be an act of service in God's name?
2. Will this project result in spiritual growth for the leaguers involved?
3. Can this project be financed by leaguer's personal giving through free-will offerings?
4. Will this project enable leaguers to use creatively and imaginatively their talents and abilities as given them by God?
5. Will this project honor Christ and aid in the proclamation of His message?

PRESENTATION POINTERS

Give the introduction to this topic in your own words. Divide into six groups, each to discuss one reason why commercialism is detrimental. If your group is small, divide into three groups, each group discussing two reasons. At least two weeks before the meeting appoint leaders for the groups so that they may get some ideas on the subject their group will discuss. After discussion have the groups present summaries to the entire group.

Continue with the next section of the topic, stopping after each of the five points to discuss. Evaluate your church and league's stewardship—is it free-will or commercial? How can you as a league improve your stewardship response through time, ability, and money?

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

HYMN 179 (Christian Youth Hymnal) "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

PRAYER 24, page 366 (Leader pause between phrases for silent prayer.)

HYMN 174 "Give Thanks, All Ye People, Give Thanks to the Lord"

PSALM 48 Gloria Patri

SCRIPTURE 2 Corinthians 8:1-9

TOPIC

SCRIPTURE Luke 21:1-4

HYMN 253 "Saviour, Thy Dying Love"

OFFERING

PRAYER Hymn 290 "We Give Thee But Thine Own" two verses (read in unison)

HYMN 249 "Take My Life, and Let It Be"

Echoes

JULY

1. Use a patriotic theme for your July party. If you haven't already had parties or topics on the North American neighbors theme now is the time to do it. Hawaii and Alaska, our new states, will provide you with much material. Use your imagination.

2. If you haven't already had an outdoor meeting—topic or worship—don't put it off any longer. There is an excellent service of worship for the outdoors in the back of the *Christian Youth Hymnal*.

3. Why not plan a swimming party. Be sure you have expert swimmers along as chaperones or go to a place that has plenty of lifeguards.

AUGUST

1. August is the month for picnics, so your league should plan to have one too. While you're at it, why not combine it with a nice hike. (Make sure there's no poison ivy along the way.)

2. And while we're planning picnics, how about having one as a project. It could be a lot of fun. If there's a home for children near your community plan to have a picnic for them. Your arrangements will depend upon how many leaguers you have and where you will

have the picnic. The ideal thing would be to have one guest for each leaguer. Each leaguer would pack a lunch for two and share it with a guest. For the project be sure to make careful arrangements with the home.

SEPTEMBER

1. A party theme this month might be "back to school." You will find some suggestions in past issue of *Luther Life* or looking in the *Luther Life* index.

2. Another party (or you could combine the two ideas) would be a party to welcome new members. The fall of the year is usually the time for adding new members. Be sure to make them feel welcome.

3. In order to have new members—and to stir up new interest in the old members—you could plan a fall visitation program. Be sure to check with the pastor for confirmands or new families, with Sunday school registrations, and at the local school.

4. You may be involved in the fall house-cleaning at home, but it will be more fun at the church with other young people. Your meeting room or the nave of the church could be the spots you want to clean. Be sure to check with the pastor and the sexton. In some parishes you will want to check with the women's group too.

(Continued from page 21)

three it is. Perhaps since they have a hint it will be easier to arrange the letters correctly. Discuss sincerity. Do the same with the other two.

WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS

HYMN 72 (*Christian Youth Hymnal*) "O Lord, All Glorious, Lord of Life"

THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN 289 "Before Thy Throne, O God, We Kneel"

BEATITUDES, page 359

HYMN 223 "My Soul, Be on Thy Guard"

SCRIPTURE Romans 12:1-18

HYMN 284 "I Would Be True"

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

What are sins of commission and omission? (Check with your pastor.) How does this fit in the theme of "Little Things Mean a Lot"? What is human nature in conflict with Christian nature? What if Christ had been insincere? What are common excuses given for missing Lutheran League and church? What answers can you give to young people who use these excuses? What if Christ would have excused himself from the cross? What is a preconceived idea? Does gossip fall into this category?

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

900 QUEEN LANE

PHILADELPHIA 29, PENNSYLVANIA

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TERM 1957-61

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TOM RIDENHOUR, Social Action
Box 1439, Davidson, N. C.

FRED REISZ, Recreation
Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa.

OUR WRITERS

ELEANOR BOCKELMAN (p. 29) is a housewife from Columbus, Ohio; KING BRADOW (p. 6) is pastor of Grace-St. Paul Lutheran Church, West Rushville, Ohio; CAROL DAILY (p. 36) is a 1959 graduate of the Lutheran Deaconess School, Baltimore, Md.; GWEN ELLSWORTH (p. 36) is a 1959 graduate of the Deaconess School; JUDY FORD (p. 22) is president of the Luther League of America; KATHY KEENER (p. 36) is a graduate of the Deaconess School; EDWERTH E. KORTE (p. 8) is chaplain at Gettysburg College; JOHN HALVORSON (p. 26) is professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.; SALLY McCAHAN (p. 36) is a 1959 graduate of the Deaconess School; BOB MENGES (p. 32) is vice president of the Luther League of America; BEATRICE MYERS (p. 41) is a housewife from State College, Pa.; RICHARD C. PANKOW (p. 16) is pastor of St. John and St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Syracuse, N. Y.; DAVID PREUS (p. 11) is pastor of University Church of Hope, Minneapolis, Minn.; and ROSS STOVER (p. 2) is pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, Pa.

Coming Attractions

Martin Luther

What Catholics believe

Advent

Christmas-family affair

Winter dating

What God expects of you

Cheating

Institutions of the Church

Professor of Christian Education
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
2770 Marin Avenue
Berkeley 8, Calif.